

BRITAIN'S MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL STORY-STRIPS



£1

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STEVE BELL'S ANIMAL FARM!

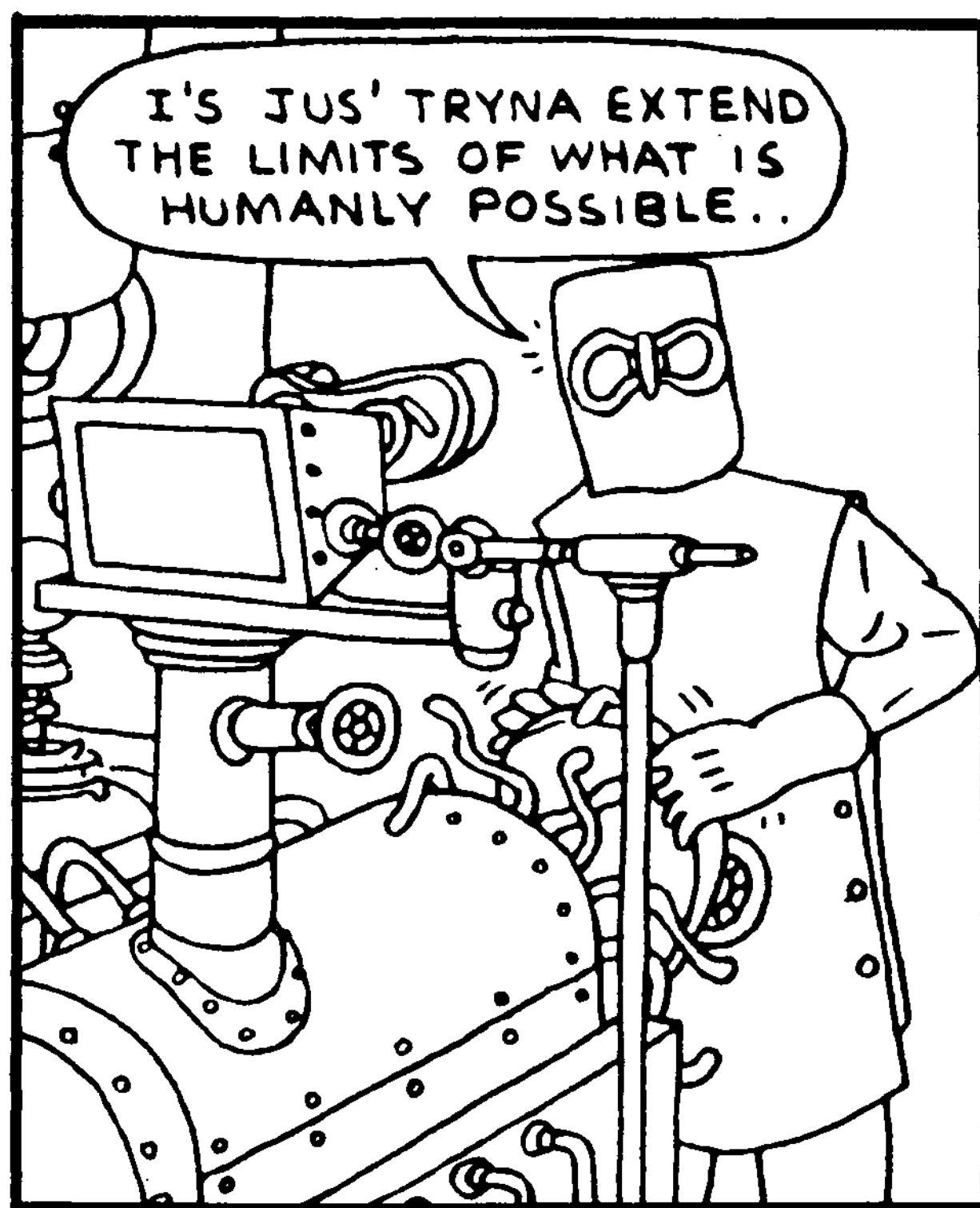
SPAGHETTI FUMETTI ♦ ITALIAN COMICS!

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■ *Ode to Billy Joe* ■

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■ *The Zebra Room* ■

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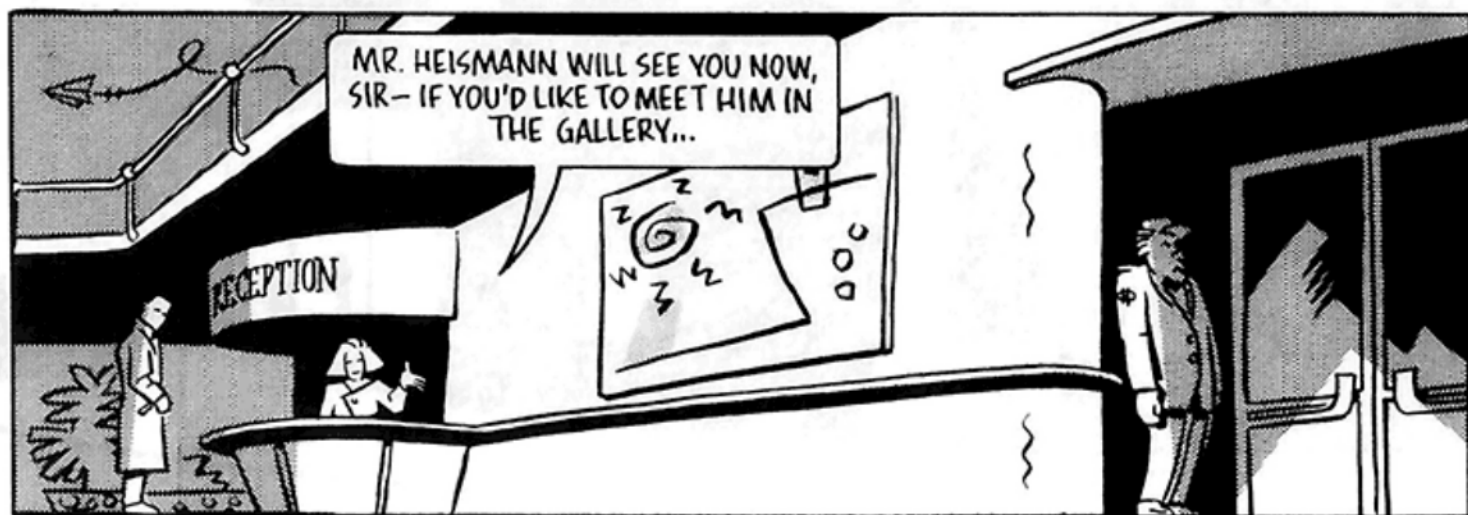


CAT NOS - SEVEN INCH IRS 117 - TWELVE INCH IRSY 117 - LP IRS A7046

DARK DESIGN



... AND BUY UP ALL HER AVAILABLE WORKS—SKETCHES, EVERYTHING. I WANT THIS MARKET CORNERED... IF YOU DO YOUR JOB PROPERLY HER LIFETIME'S OUTPUT COULD REST WITH US



...INCLUDING FIRST OPTION
ON ALL WORKS YOU MAY
PRODUCE UNDER MY SPONSORSHIP.

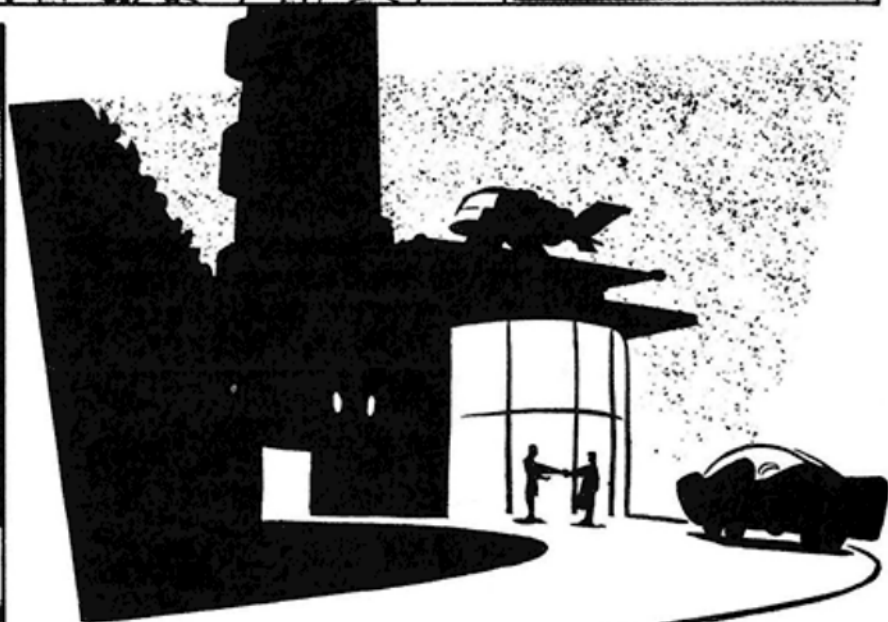
YOU UNDERSTAND THE POSITION?

JOHN, I NEVER DID
LIKE YOUR TERMS, BUT
I REALLY DON'T SEEM TO
HAVE ANY CHOICE. THE
COST OF MATERIALS
ALONE...



... BUT WITH NO BACKING,
THERE WILL BE NO SHOW.

IT'S A DEAL



WELL, INEZ? HOW MUCH IS
HE WORTH TO US?

BEFORE THE SHOW, NOT
A GREAT DEAL, I'M AFRAID

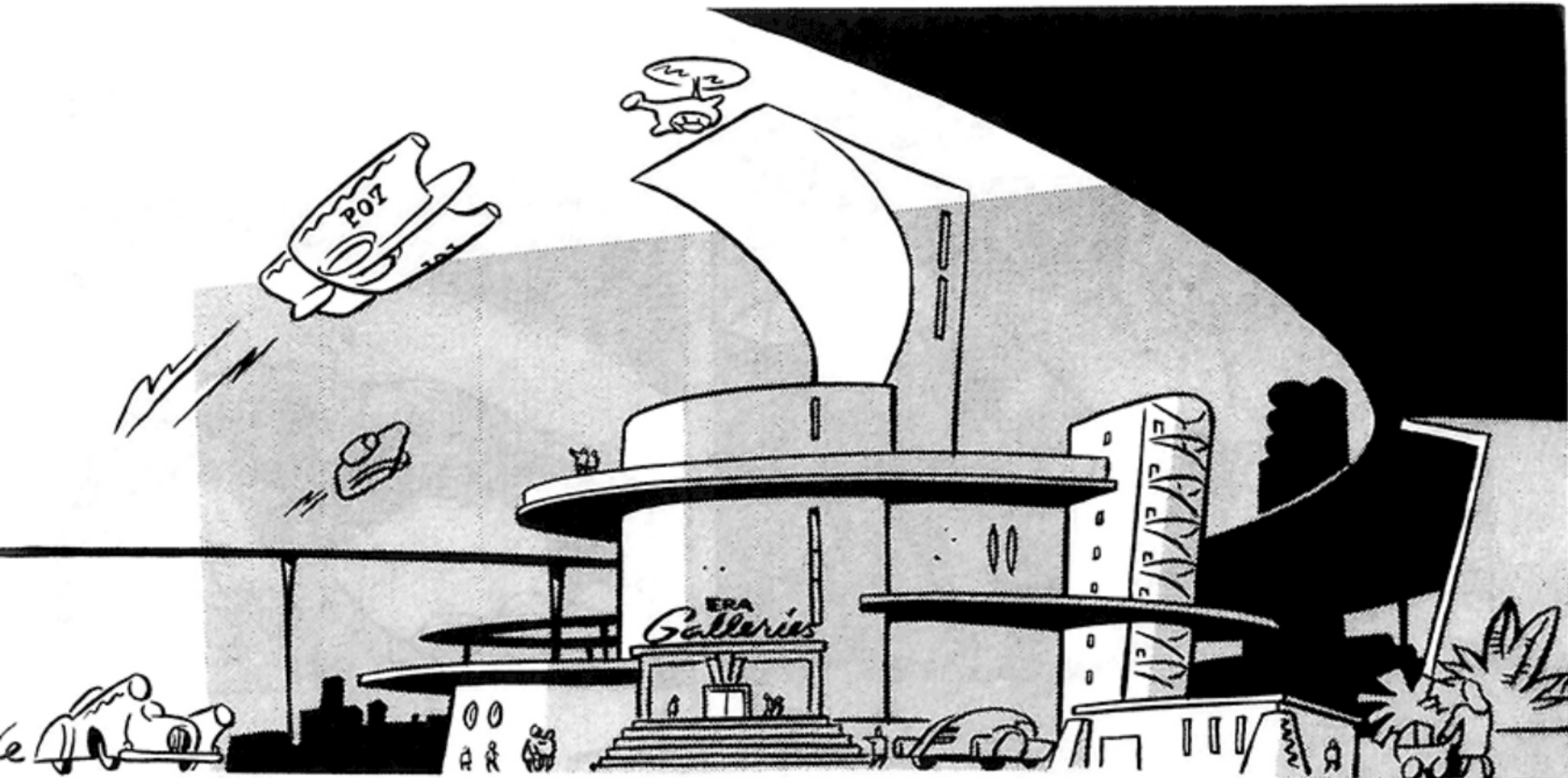


BUT I'VE LOOKED INTO THIS
QUITE THOROUGHLY, SIR—
AFTER, THERE'S A POSSIBLE
200% INCREASE IN THE VALUE
OF HIS WORK

AND AFTER POSSIBLE
TERMINATION?

HARD TO TELL—BUT
WELL OVER 800%



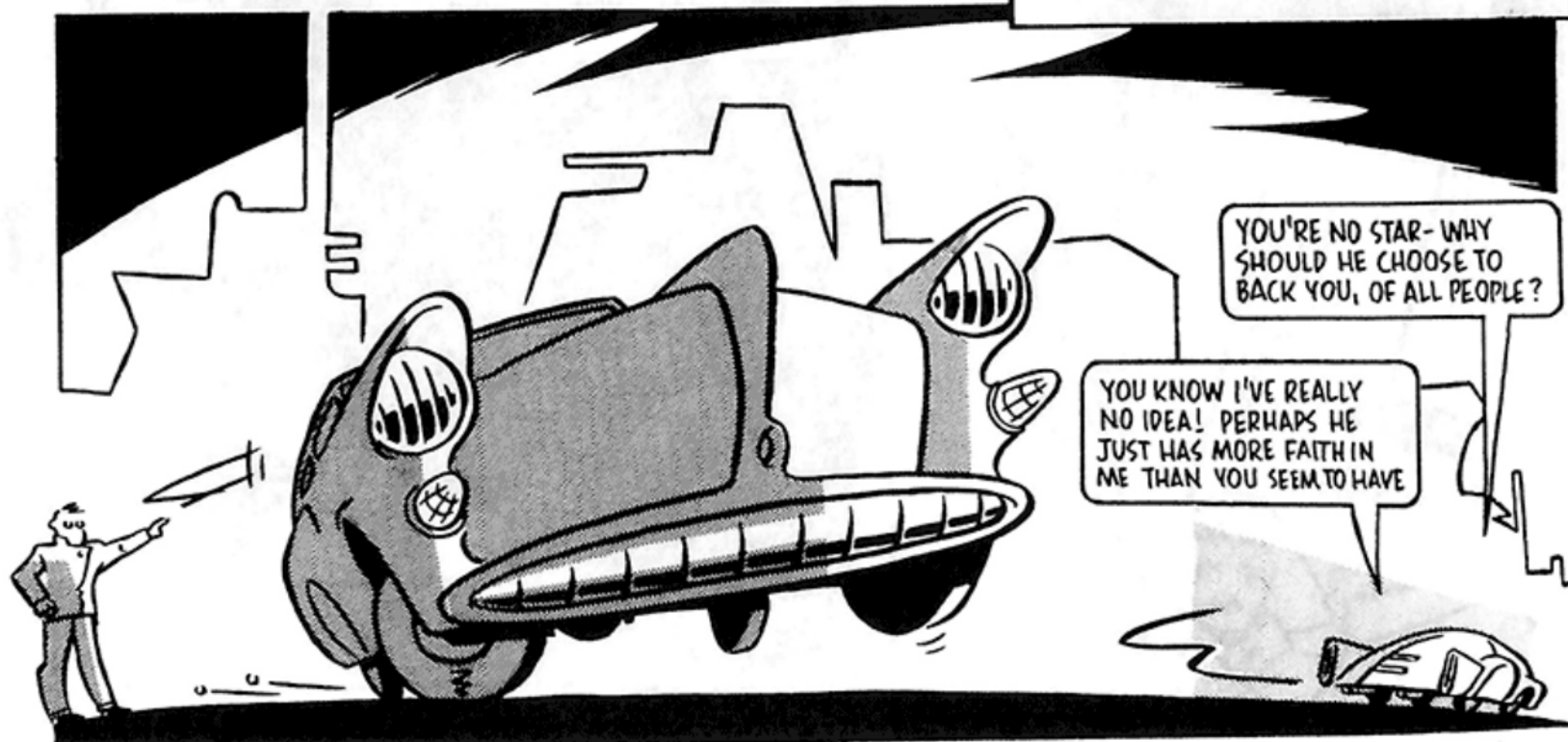


EMMA, I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET THE PERSON WHO MADE THIS SHOW POSSIBLE

MAGNIFICENT, JERRY! I LIKE IT!

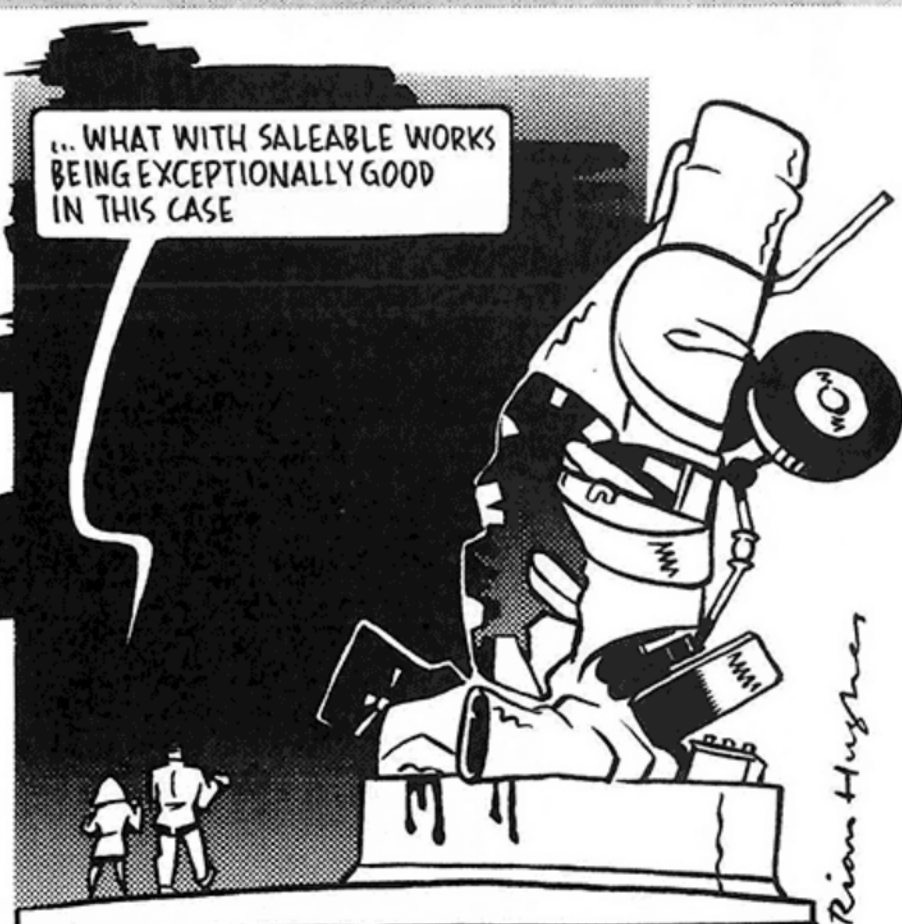
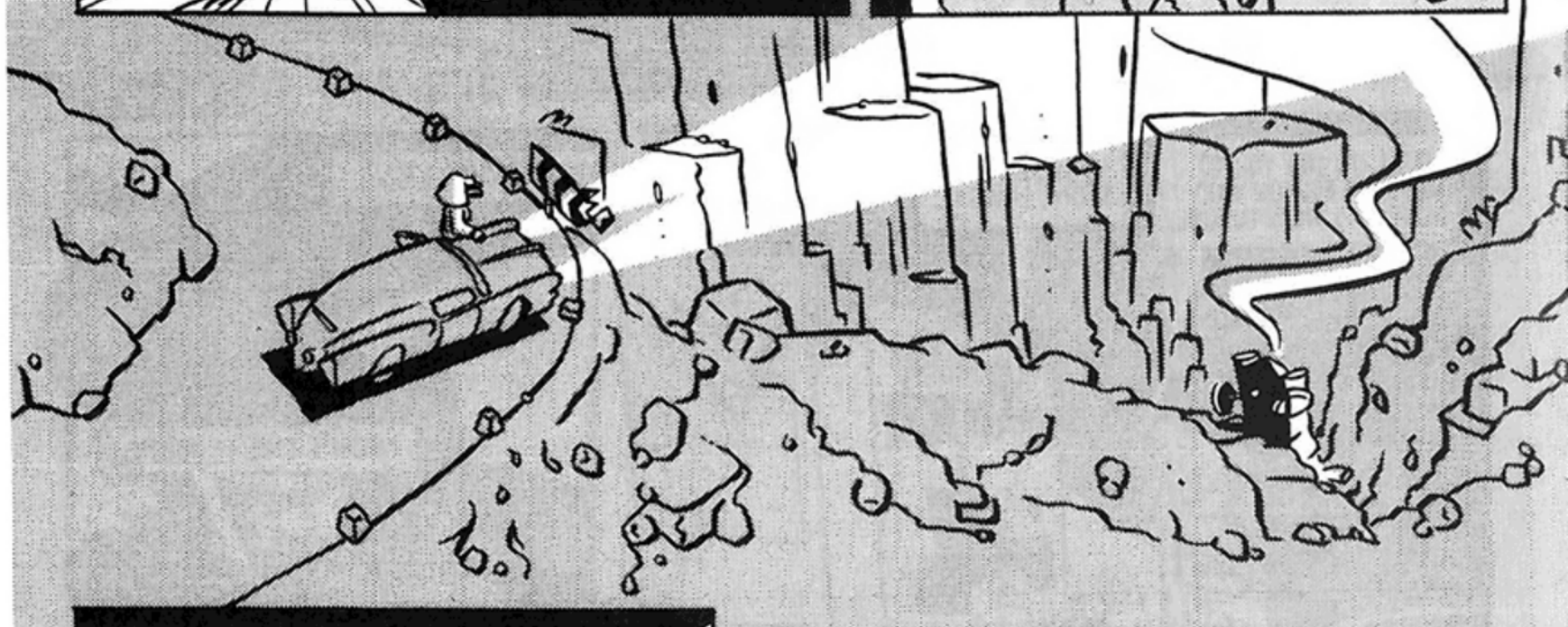
AND AFTER A SUCCESSFUL OPENING NIGHT,...

I DON'T LIKE IT, JERRY,...



YOU'RE NO STAR - WHY SHOULD HE CHOOSE TO BACK YOU, OF ALL PEOPLE?

YOU KNOW I'VE REALLY NO IDEA! PERHAPS HE JUST HAS MORE FAITH IN ME THAN YOU SEEM TO HAVE



Popular Graphics



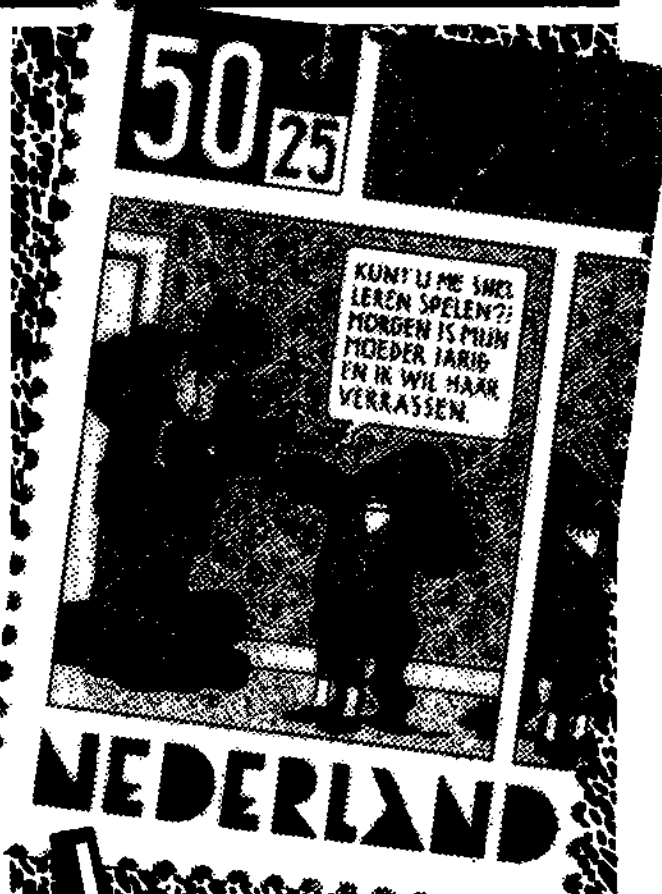
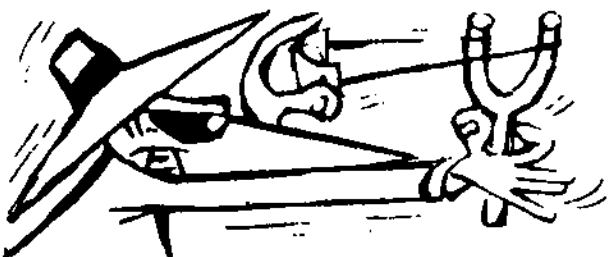
FLOOK, the social commentary strip, was given three months' notice last summer to quit the **Daily Mail**, supposedly on the grounds that the editor wanted to re-jig the paper and thought the strip had had its day. Artist Trog, alias Wally Fawkes, can't help wondering if his send-ups of Mrs Thatcher didn't have more to do with it. He admitted to us, "I'd have fired me long ago!" No sooner was his departure announced than Robert Maxwell of the **Daily Mirror** suggested that he 'come into the warm'. So after

over 35 years and 11,000 daily strips in the **Mail**, Flook and his pal Rufus settled in at the **Mirror**, which announced their arrival on its November 19th front Page.

Not that the **Mirror** isn't into some Spring cleaning of its own. It works both ways with the announcement that Bill Tidy's epic of tripe and men, 'The Fosdyke Saga', is to be axed. This is part of a general re-shuffle that's rumoured to bring back the Forces' Favourite, 'Jane'. Tidy's reaction to the news: 'It's like having half your family murdered.'

■ **JULES FEIFFER** paid a lightning visit to London in January to catch a video of the Lyric Theatre's production of **Feiffer's America**. He was very happy with actor Harry Ditson's adaptation of the Penguin book which collects Feiffer's strip commentary on America from Eisenhower to Reagan. The cast of seven included Ed (UFO) Bishop as Ronnie and Lynn Seymour as Feiffer's famous dancer. A new production is being planned for the West End after Easter.

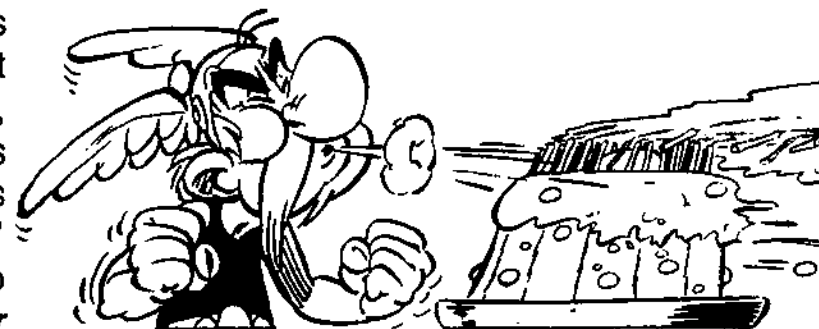
▼ **SPY VS SPY** is the silent strip in **Mad Magazine**, in which pointy-nosed Black Spy and White Spy chase after secret information and spend most of their time setting tricky traps for each other. The series was created by Antonio Prohias, Cuba's top cartoonist, and it has now been made into a computer game, taking the spies' 'friendly rivalry' onto your TV screen. For the Commodore 64 from Beyond Software, £9.95.



■ **JOOST SWARTE** has designed four postage stamps for the Dutch Government to celebrate 'Children and the Comic Strip'. Each stamp shows a panel from a strip where children have the upper hand over adults.

GHOSTBUSTERS' now world-famous logo is the subject of a \$50 million lawsuit brought against Columbia Pictures by the comics and cartoon company, Harvey Famous Cartoons. They charge that the spooked spook is actually one of their characters, a member of The Ghostly Trio, who float through **Casper the Friendly Ghost** comics. There certainly is some resemblance...

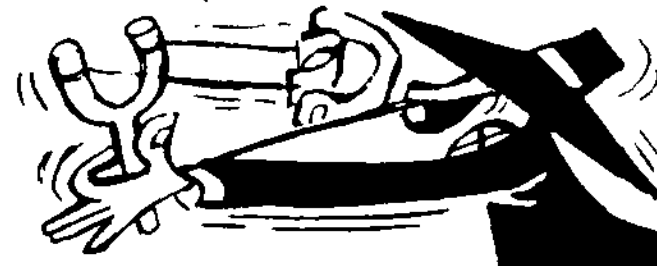
■ **BILLY BRAGG** likes to take time off from his political tomes by reading comics. His favourites are **2000AD**, and **Fantastic Four** which gave him the idea for his Jack Kirby-style 'Porta-Stack', his backpack sound system.



▲ **ASTERIX**, the plucky Gaul, celebrated his 25th Birthday last year — he first appeared in issue one of the French weekly **Pilote** on October 29th 1959, written by Rene Goscinny and drawn by Albert Uderzo. In Britain Asterix went on the air over Christmas '84 in a six-part adaptation for Radio 4 of his album, **Asterix in Britain**. Asterix was played by David Ross and Obelix by Roy Barraclough.

■ **THRILLER**, the macabre Michael Jackson video, was story-boarded by American comics artist, Dave Stevens, who has just completed his slick nostalgic serial, 'The Rocketeer', soon to appear in album form.

■ **SHEENA, QUEEN OF THE JUNGLE** follows **SUPERGIRL** out of the comics and onto the big screen. She's a blonde Tarzan in a leopard-skin bikini, dreamt up by Will Eisner and Jerry Iger in 1938. In the film she's played by Charlie's Angel Tanya Roberts who had to ride a white horse painted with black stripes, because zebras were impossible to train!

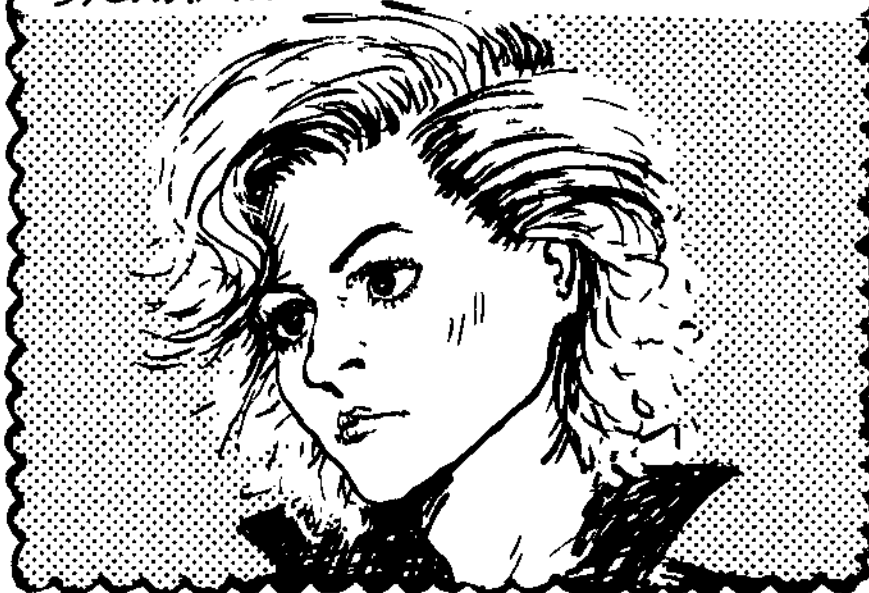




...AND THE GIGS! STEVE USED TO CHOP UP A RUBBER DOLL FULL OF SWARFEGA WIV AN 'EDGE TRIMMER. THEY 'AD ONE SONG CALLED "EXTERMINATE SUBURBIA" WHICH THEY USED TO PLAY ALL NIGHT, NON-STOP. PEOPLE GOT INJURED AT GIGS IN THEM DAYS...



IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE IT ALL GOT BORIN'. PEOPLE STOPPED BEIN' SHOCKED. THE MUSIC GOT YUK AGAIN, WOT WIV KATE BUSH AN' JILTED JOHN. I GOT INTO ELECTRO, LIKE ULTRAVOX, KRAFTWERK AN' JAPAN. I DYED ME BARNET LIKE DAVID SYLVIAN...



NOW IT'S BACK TO JUST BEIN' A PRODUCT. EVERYTHIN' WE WERE AGAINST 'AS TAKEN OVER!



I THINK IT WAS ALL DAFT. YOU CAN'T CHANGE ANYTHING JUST BY DRESSING WEIRD AND PLAYING HORRIBLE MUSIC.

THERE WAS MORE TO IT THAN THAT. PUNK WAS ABOUT LETTIN' OUT FRUSTRATION...



WE WERE SAYING WE WERE INDIVIDUALS, NOT JUST STATISTICS. WE WANTED SOCIETY TO ACCEPT US FOR WHAT WE WERE...



AND NOW THEY'VE ACCEPTED US!



DON'T·MISS·OUT



FILM

GAY

NIGHTLIFE

CHILDREN

CLASSICAL

TELEVISION

THEATRE

VIDEO

RADIO

VISUAL ARTS

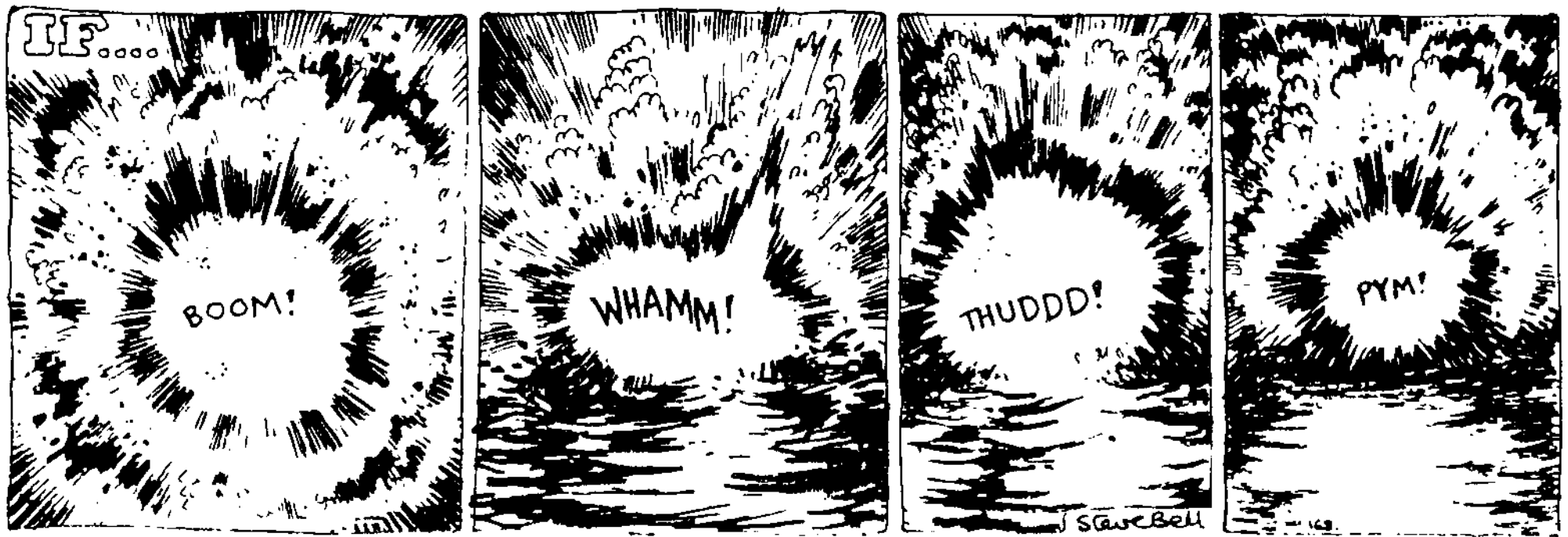
AGITPROP

SPORT

CABARET

DANCE

TAKE·TimeOut·WEEKLY



STEVE BELL

Of Penguins and Politics

Interview by Paul Gravett



With hindsight it was strangely ironic that I should be interviewing Steve Bell, Fleet Street's fiercest anti-Thatcher cartoonist, in his home town of Brighton, where only a few days later the Tory Party Conference was to take place. Who could have guessed that a terrorist bomb would devastate the seafront hotel where the politicians were staying?

Steve Bell hasn't always worked as a cartoonist. He used to be a teacher and was nicknamed 'Bigfoot' by the kids, after the Canadian 'Yeti' out of the rocky mountains. And when I met him, I could understand why - all 6'6" of him, with a black beard and bass voice. Born in London in 1951, he grew up in Slough reading **The Beano** and later studied Fine Art at Teeside College and Film-Making at Leeds University. In fact he's recently scripted and designed the sets and characters for an animated video put out by Birmingham's Trade Union Resource Centre starring a bunch of Brummy teenage penguins. His strips began in the alternative press, drawing 'Maxwell the Mutant' who changed shape every month in Birmingham's now defunct **Broadside**, and 'Lord God Almighty' in **The Leveller**. He's worked for publications as diverse as **Social Work Today** and **Whoopee!** But he's best known for his current series 'If...' and 'Maggie's Farm', probably this country's most biting satirical strips since Scarfe and Steadman at their peak and Hogarth and Cruikshank before them. He started 'Maggie's Farm' in **Time Out** in 1979, transferring it to **City Limits** in 1981. Shortly after he began 'If...' in **The Guardian** on a month's probation alongside 'Doonesbury'. Four years later he's still scratching away on the 'Street of Shame'.

As we sat down to talk in his attic studio, we set about a packet of Prawn Cocktail Flavour Snacks and several bananas. Steve dug out some of his favourite well-worn **Beano** and **Beezer** annuals. □

STEVE: These are such high quality annuals compared to today's. I always liked busy stuff like 'The Banana Bunch' but I didn't know it was by Leo Baxendale till years later. As a kid I used to fill up the flyleaves of my family's books with drawings of trains, cos it was the only blank paper I could find. And my brother and I created our own characters - zombies! To do comics, it's very important to have a world of your own, which you can inhabit and develop. You can create everything in it - you can do that in no other medium. That's more important than copying other people's styles.

PAUL: So that started you off doing your own cartoons?

S: Yes and slowly over the years I've built up my own vocabulary. Of course I've used references for political caricatures or when I've got to draw Big Ben and I can't remember what it looks like. But everything else I get out of my head. My anatomy has always been totally up the creek, but in another sense that doesn't worry me in the least, because it's supposed to look daft. All my Fine Art training didn't have much reference to my cartooning - the only way you learn the techniques is by doing it. And for all the techniques you learn or pick up, it depends in the end on whether the ideas are there, and they come from your experience of life.

P: So what did you get out of your art courses?

S: Being able to discuss things and having my views listened to. My experience at school was that you had to learn facts and then they demanded opinions of you at examinations and you've been given no means of developing your own opinions! I wasn't confident in my own political ideas till I went to Leeds University - that was a stimulating atmosphere.

P: Did you come from a Left-wing family?

S: Oh no, my Dad was a rising young executive and we used to get the **Daily Mail**. I was brought up on it, that's why I hate it so much! After I left school, the first issues I started feeling strongly about were capital punishment and apartheid in South Africa around 1970. At that time anarchism appealed to me a lot, but I've moved away from it since.

P: Wasn't one of your first jobs, between art courses, drawing for ICI fertilisers?

S: Yes, in a huge chemical works pumping out this foul smell - it was like Hell on Earth! I actually did some cartoons there, like a rear three-quarters view of a fertiliser lorry!

P: After Leeds you ended up getting a job teaching Art at Manor Comprehensive in Birmingham.

S: Yes, my wife Heather was working there then. I couldn't stand teaching. I didn't like working in public in front of thirty kids, having to be on the ball all the time. I much prefer working on my own. That's what drove me to doing freelance ▶

cartooning. Meeting deadlines every week now is nowhere near as stressful as I found teaching. I'd worry the whole weekend about what was going to happen on Monday! I met some great people in Birmingham, but as a city it's pretty dire, it's got no centre! I met Hunt Emerson when he was doing Ar-Zak comics and he told me, '*I wouldn't advise you do it for a living!*'

P: *He's still telling people that!*

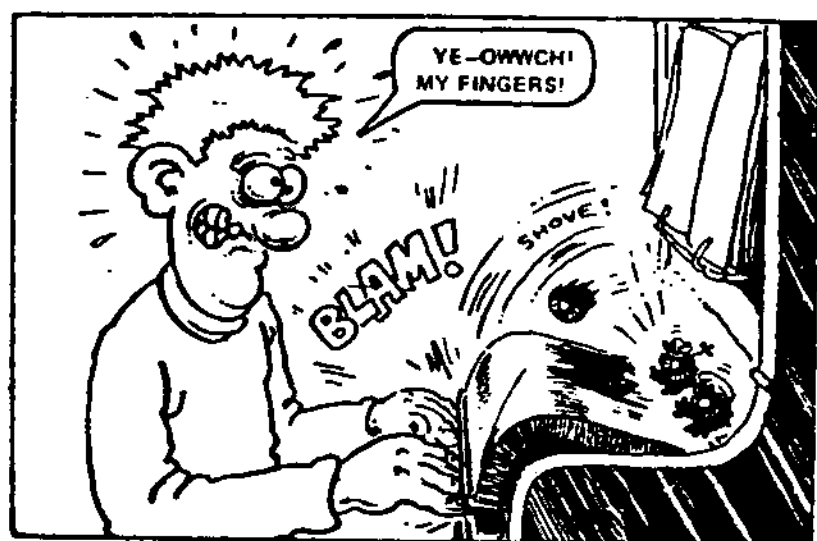


S: The first properly finished strip of mine was printed in Ar-Zak's **Committed Comix** in 1977, the year I jacked in teaching after the summer term. Then I worked on a strip about a train going back in time. I took ages on these panels - they looked like 19th century engravings. I never finished it, but I sent copies to Leo Baxendale who encouraged me to keep at it. I was also very influenced then by Robert Crumb. I'd done some cartoons while I was teaching for Birmingham **Broadside** including a strip called 'Maxwell the Mutant'. I went down to London and showed Bob Paynter at IPC my stuff, it was very Crumb-ish. He said, '*We're dealing with 8 year olds, I wouldn't do that if I were you, son!*' When I did go freelance I worked on all sorts of things, totally disparate. I did **Broadside**, **The Leveller**, plus '*serious*' illustrations for **Social Work Today** and similar publications. I also did a few single cartoons for **NME**, but I preferred strips, and anyway I've never been into rock music much. But my first regular paid cartooning was for **Whoopee** at IPC. I started with 'Dick Doobie, The Back-To-Front Man'. Pretty gross. I wrote and drew them at first but my scripts kept getting rejected so they eventually got one of their own scripters in. By then I was more interested in doing other stuff to please myself. I was doing the IPC strips for money. I did one a week for 30 weeks.

P: *Did you pick up the basics of doing comics at IPC?*

S: I learnt what **not** to do. I was trying too hard to be slick. They expected me to draw bigger and I always work small, because I draw left-handed, so I'm not given to great gestures. Mind you, I did learn about drawing motion. In 1979

▼ I created 'Gremlins' (no relation) which ran in **Jackpot** at the same time as 'Maggie's Farm' then in **Time Out**. By 1981 my relations with IPC were getting strained and they eventually



dropped 'Gremlins'. Later that year I started the 'If...' strip in **The Guardian**. It took a long time to get going. I started off with a different proposition every day. That was mind-boggling, I was wasting ideas. I started it in November '81 and it wasn't till January '82 that I changed it to a continuing narrative to hold people's attention and sustain myself.

P: *Do you find the daily strip format limiting?*

S: Yes, obviously. I usually do four panels, sometimes five, six, even one. Sometimes the need for a daily punchline can be quite tyrannical and things seem slightly forced, but I end up doing it because of the pressure of deadlines.

P: *How do your deadlines work out?*

S: I do a week's worth of 'If...'s at once. I draw three of them on an A3 sheet. Usually I stay a week ahead, so I can be topical. For instance next week the Tory conference is on here.

P: *Do you get any tips from the paper?*

S: No, not with **The Guardian**. I do 'Maggie's Farm' every week for **City Limits** now and sometimes Duncan Campbell, their news editor, will ring up and we'll chat about ideas.

P: *I notice you've been invited as a City Limits reporter to the Tory conference.*

S: I've been to a couple before and they're quite horrific!

P: *How do you work out your caricatures?*

S: I've never found that they come easily. I use photo references.

P: *What about Reagan for example?*

S: Reagan's just a mass of lines and a huge pointed haircut! I find the best ones are simple. like Badger Courage, based on Anderton. Tebbitt's quite easy. with his sunken cheeks, deepset eyes and domed head. I have to break them down into a simple set of symbols to use caricatures in a strip.

P: *How do you think the 'If...' strip has progressed?*

S: I think The Falklands War was when it found its feet. That's when I discovered that you can comment on quite serious deadly things in what is apparently just a lunatic joke strip, which is all that many people think strip cartoons are. I was doing The Falklands at the time, not in retrospect. The story was basically two characters just talking on this nuclear punt, one of them bearing a strong facial resemblance to Dan Dare. I took a long time over it, because at the time there was a chance that people were actually going to die, so I had to tread carefully. The strip has always attracted a very mixed reaction. Also I, like everybody else then, was confused about what the Hell was going on. I simply asked straightforward questions in the strip and began to make sense of it. Only by imagining what was going on, could I come to some sort of truth. In a sense 'If...' was a lot truer than a lot of the crap in the papers purporting to be fact. Because there weren't any photos available, newspapers used these shitty strips with these artists' impressions of 'the commandoes going in at dawn'. The only way to get around these awful cartoons was to do something fictional. And when the bombings and killings started, the strip became absurdist, totally lunatic, with all these penguins flying about!

P: *The penguins have become star attractions of 'If...' with their crazy behaviour.*

S: That's based on things you see having children around. The penguins came in as an afterthought down in The Falklands. They appeared for about a week and then disappeared and I had all these letters saying '*Please don't let the penguin go!*' The only strip from that time that was censored was one with a series of explosions (BOOM! WHAM! THUD! PYM!) that was due to be published the same day that the paper was going to print photos of HMS Sheffield blowing up.

P: *Has The Guardian ever objected to other strips?*

S: I've had to change things three or four times because they

SMASH!

NE NE NA NA NU NU!

STAND ON YOUR OWN TWO FEET, GRANDAD!

HELLS TORIES

BACK OFF, FOUR EYES!

HOT TEAS CAFE

THEY'RE CELEBRATING THEIR FIRST ANNIVERSARY!

RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!

SKRUNCH

GRIND!

GRAUNCH!

COVERLY

were worried about libel. And they have been known to change the odd word without consulting me, which I was infuriated by. I'm always prepared to discuss my strips, I don't think they're sacrosanct, but they're forging my handwriting!

S: Whatever you do, you're bound to come up against some kind of argument. There's nothing wrong with arguing these points. I think you should discuss them. A lot of cartoonists say *'That's my work, my work has purity, what gives you the right?'* etc. The problem with them is that they don't engage their brains before picking up their pens. They're just toeing the paper's editorial line and rarely use their own critical faculties. Also there are a lot of Left-wing cartoonists about but very few highly visible outlets for them. I've got one of the major ones in **The Guardian**, and even that's shunted up at the back of the paper on that dustbin page and people only get to know about it slowly. I don't mind being there though. There are a lot of aspects of **The Guardian** I don't like at all - its editorial line always makes me vomit!

S: I get **The Guardian** and **The Mirror** but I don't read them cover to cover.

S: I saw through it some time ago! **The Mail** wasn't as virulent in the '60s as it is now. I used to read Trog's 'Flook' when I was a kid, written then by George Melly. And the very detailed cartoons by Illingworth. Illingworth was a Right-wing cartoonist, but you can have intelligent Right-wing cartoonists and you can have bludgeoning stupid Right-wing

S: Not much, in this country. The Americans seem to do them better, because they've got a longer tradition of it. Sometimes **The Guardian** reproduces Olliphant or Auth and I admire them, they're hard-hitting, they seem stronger than their British counterparts.

S: Scarfe hasn't got much to say. Obviously he's a good draughtsman and his earlier work was uncompromising, but now it's confused politically. Steadman did some things in the **New Statesman** recently about the miners' strike that were just inane. I saw his exhibition at the Festival Hall and there was some lovely stuff there, but he's become bottled up in this style that looks angry and expressive, but when he's got nothing particular to say, it seems like a waste and becomes distracting. Scarfe and Steadman have become the established angry cartoonists, but they're not anymore. People have got used to their anger and it loses its effect.

S: I've got to feel something, otherwise there's no point doing it. Of course anger can get in the way, you've got to control it, channel and direct it. But you can't be angry the whole time!

... Actually you can be, it's really easy in this country! Heather and I have Radio 4 on all day and there's always something on to make your blood boil! We argue with the radio non-stop!

© Steve Bell 1984

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EARLY MOZZER OF GURD! THE PINGUINS THEY COME BACK!!

HOW'S THE BABY DOING MONSIEUR L'ARTISTE?

NOTA BLECK

THE BÉBÉ SHE IS FARN. SHE SPEND MURST OF THE TARM PURGOING URP AND DOWN ON MA PANTINGS. BUT WET A MEENUTE, YOU PINGUINS..

...YOU TURLD ME YOU'D BE OUT FOR A CURPLE OF HARSE — BUT YOU'VE BEEN GONE A HURL FARTNIGHT!! WHAT HAPPEN?

WE'VE BEEN ON THE RUN MONSIEUR!

...IT'S RILLY NOTGOOD, Y'KNOW — I 'AVE THE SURCIAL SERVICES ROUND; I 'AVE THE MAN FROM LURNDON ZOO... AND ANOZZER THING — DO YOU KNOW YOUR BÉBÉS LONGWAGE IS ATRURCIOUS?

LEAVE IT OUT Y'BIG PONCE!

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▷ their throats 24 hours a day. It can get to the point where it all becomes meaningless, and people can't make up their own minds.

S: That's the desired reaction, people saying 'Fuck politics'. It's in the interest of the powers-that-be that nobody sees through them. And there's a great taboo against discussing politics. Politics take on a meaning and become vital when they touch you, for instance anyone on strike. But obviously when it's this pre-digested turgid porridge of fact and crap that comes out of the news, it's utter rubbish. Politics is serious, but it can also be very funny and very involving and it's all very fucking important, because it's the politicians who take the decisions that affect our lives.

P: But perversely haven't you been lucky to be working under a Tory government and having a target to aim your aggression at?

S: Yes, but that begs the question why more people aren't attacking her more strongly. The Government's very Right-wing and doing some very naughty things. But there seems to be this air of resignation, 'Oh, you can't really fight it.' That's nonsense. If you sit back and accept it all, you might as well give up.

P: I read that your 'If...' strip had been accused by somebody of being anti-Semitic.

S: Yes, that was one week when I was doing Kissinger as a turkey. That was a stupid accusation, that was the farthest thing from my mind when I was doing it. I think he was wilfully misreading it. I was referred to the Press Council but eventually exonerated.

P: But doesn't this raise the problem of caricaturing people who are conscious of being badly represented in a strip cartoon? Doesn't it become difficult to caricature a Jewish person or a black person, because they're more sensitive to it, even though you're caricaturing white people all the time?

S: I don't discriminate - I caricature everybody in exactly the

same way. With any caricature you have to fix on some points and leave others out. You can't do a photograph or a dispassionate rendering. Begin's the obvious example. He's hideous looking! You couldn't draw Begin straight, without people saying 'You're being anti-Semitic!' I did Begin in 'Maggie's Farm'.

P: Do you have more freedom there than in *The Guardian*?

S: In a way. It's not so widely read, so you're not likely to get such a range of responses. But to a large extent I operate self-censorship. I can't use swear words in *The Guardian*, they would take them out because they purport to be a family paper. Once I had Maggie saying 'Oh God, I'm so pissed off!' and I got a torrent of letters just about that one phrase! Also I can do more in 'Maggie's Farm' because I've got a bigger space to fill, half a page, and there's no continuity from week to week.

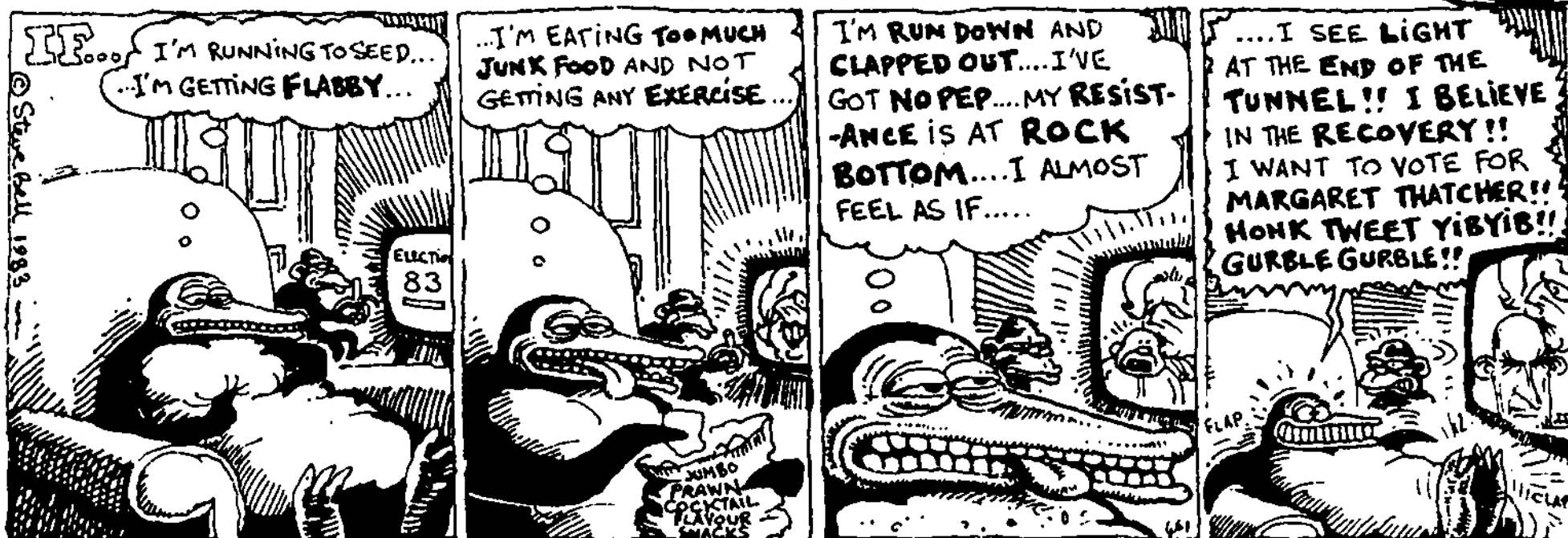
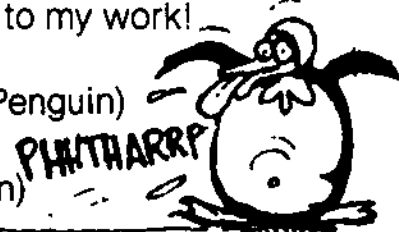
P: You're lucky having this combination, a daily serial strip and one-off weeklies. That way, if something comes along you can't fit into one, you can try it in the other.

S: Yes. I think 'If...' is more consistent. But when 'Maggie's Farm' is good, it can be much better than 'If...', but when it's bad, it can be much worse!

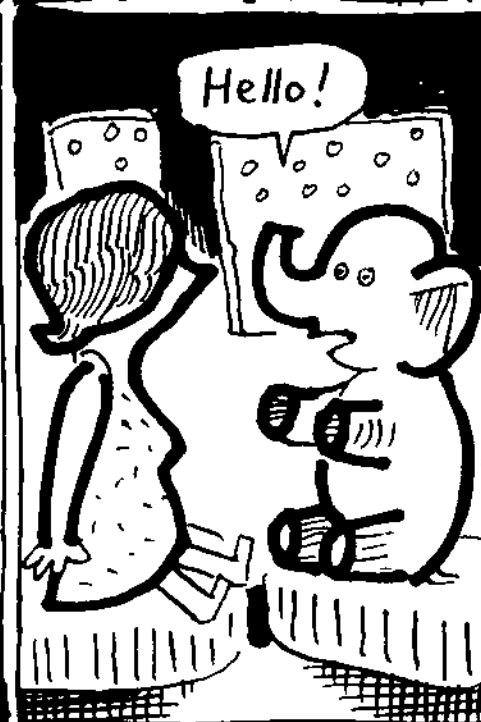
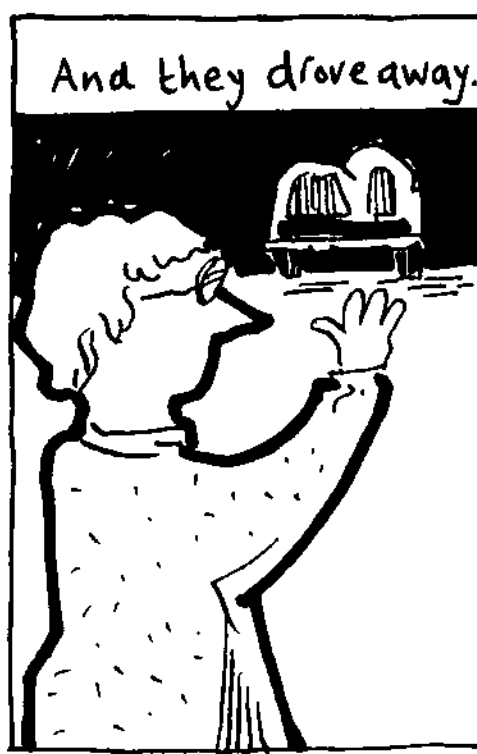
P: Do you think your strips are having an effect on people, making them think or re-think?

S: Yes, I'd be a fool if I didn't think they were. I don't think cartoons have a direct political effect in terms of making people act differently. But I am engaged in some sort of discussion and people listen to the arguments or dismiss them. A lot of people get embarrassingly praising about my stuff, and a lot of people start foaming at the mouth, but I'm not responsible for people's response to my work!

MAGGIE'S FARM - two collections (Penguin)
THE IF... CHRONICLES
 and **IF... ONLY AGAIN** (Methuen)



A Short Scenario in the PENNINES



Bird + of + Prayer

When she was
a child



My mother was
always
frightened



Whenever she had
to recite the
Lord's Prayer



Because of the
last line, which
(she thought) said:



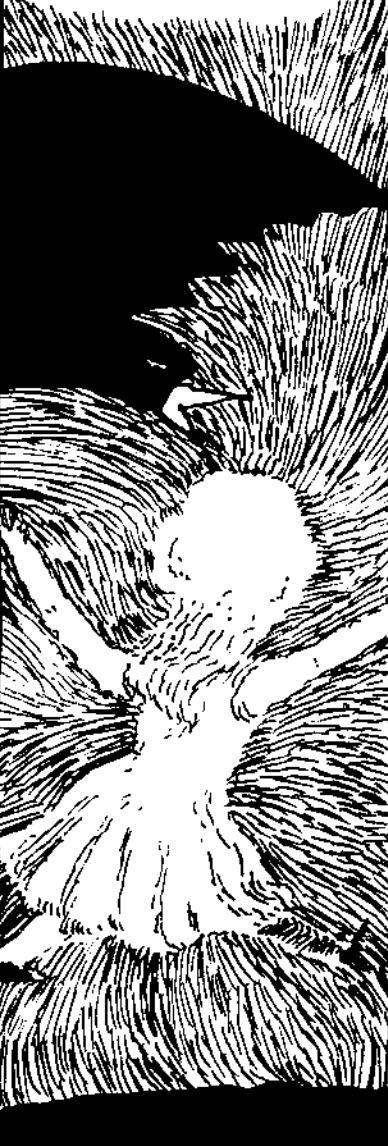
"Deliver us from
Eagle."



And she imagined
the "Eagle" was
a monstrous,
wicked Bird



That was going
to swoop down
and get her.



And for years
she was terrified
of "Eagle."

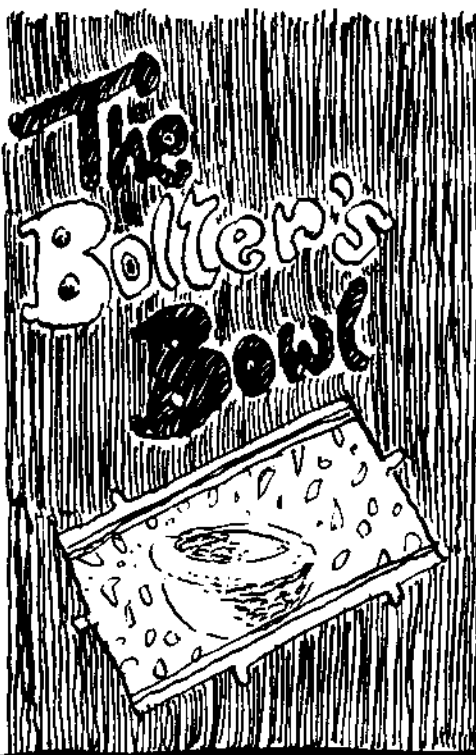


But we grown-ups
know there's
nothing to be
scared of...



We know, after
all, it's only
"EVIL".





We had this Bowl made for us, you know.



We went out to the country where he lived.



We asked for the man and they said:

IT'S BILL THE BOLTER YOU WANT.



We found his shop in some remote area.



Inside there was a huge pile of sawdust on the floor.



We asked him if we could have a wooden bowl.



He replied:

NO - NOT MUCH CHANCE OF THAT.



I think he was about seventy years old.



But then he kicked at the pile of sawdust.



Underneath were several bowls and other things he had made.



In the end he gave us a set of 7 bowls - each cut out of one block. They all fit inside each other.



Years later, I saw some things he had made in a fashionable shop window.



The Shopkeeper said Bill the Bolter's work was always in great demand.



So that was one of our adventures.



END

Ed Paset 84

The Goose in the Dell

ed
Pinsent 1984

ONE CHRISTMAS EVE, A GENTLEMAN BROKE INTO THE CAGE AT SEFTON PARK.



Ah - there you are!



Leave me alone!



Lissen Pal - don't babble at me!



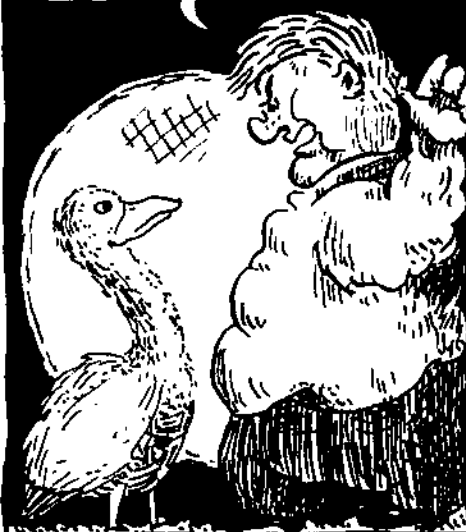
I'm gonna cook you and eat you - for me Christmas Dinner.



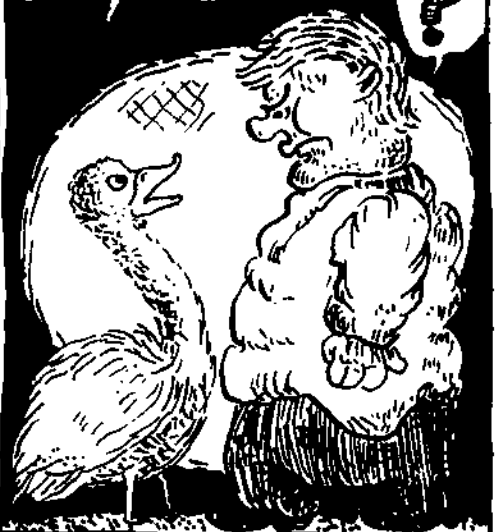
Don't you dare.



Why not? You'll not be missed.



That's just it - I WILL be missed.



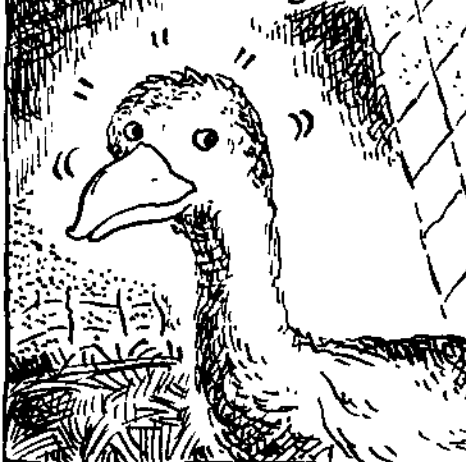
A mother and her son used to come here every week...



"They fed me grass through the wire."

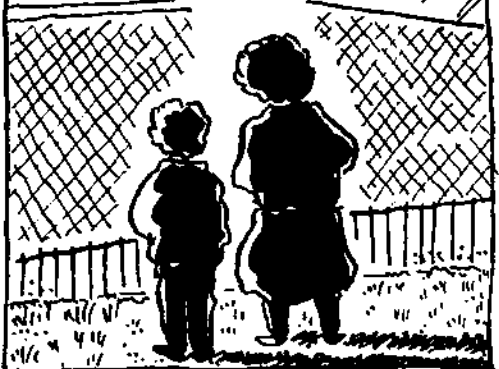


"After a while, I began to recognize them and saw them coming..."

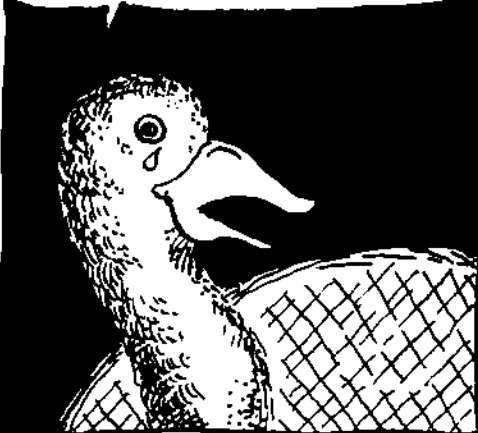


"You could hear me honking for joy a mile away."

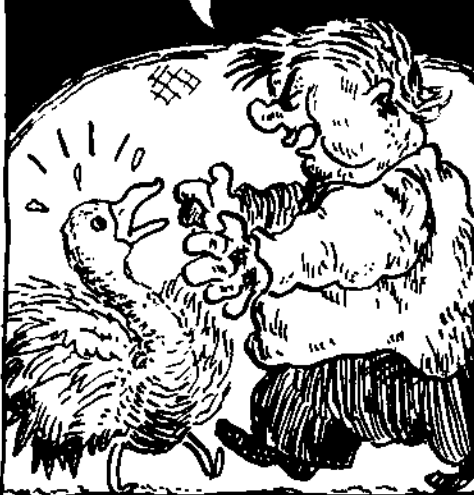
"HAWN! AWWNK! AWWNK!"



Now they haven't come for a long time, but I'll see them again... and when I do I'll honk as loud as I can.



You'll need to honk pretty loud now... to save yourself...




AAWWNK!! AWWNK! AWWNK! HAWN!!



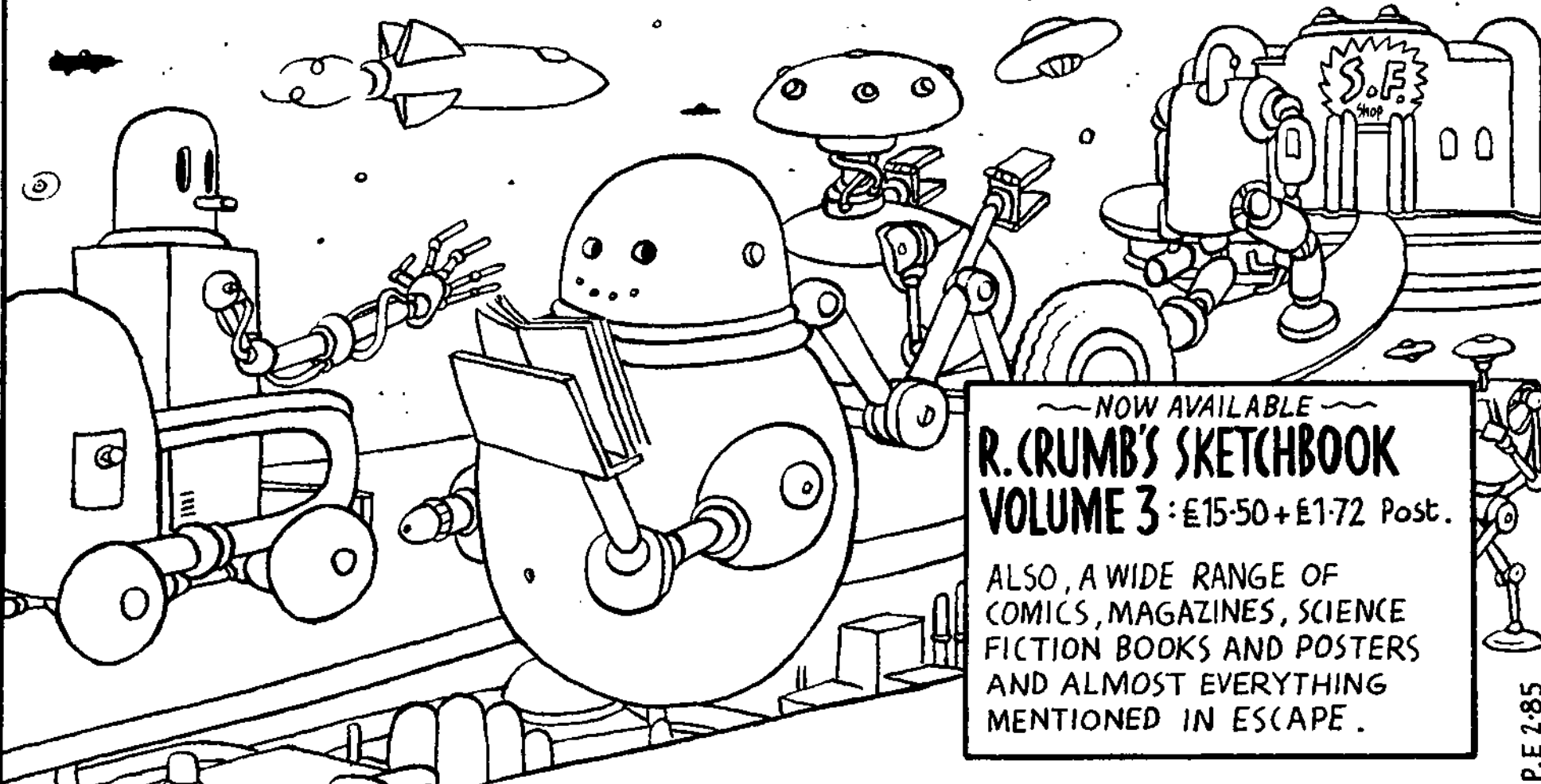
BUT HE COULDN'T WAKE UP THE MOTHER OR HER SON, WHO WERE MILES AWAY AND FAST ASLEEP.





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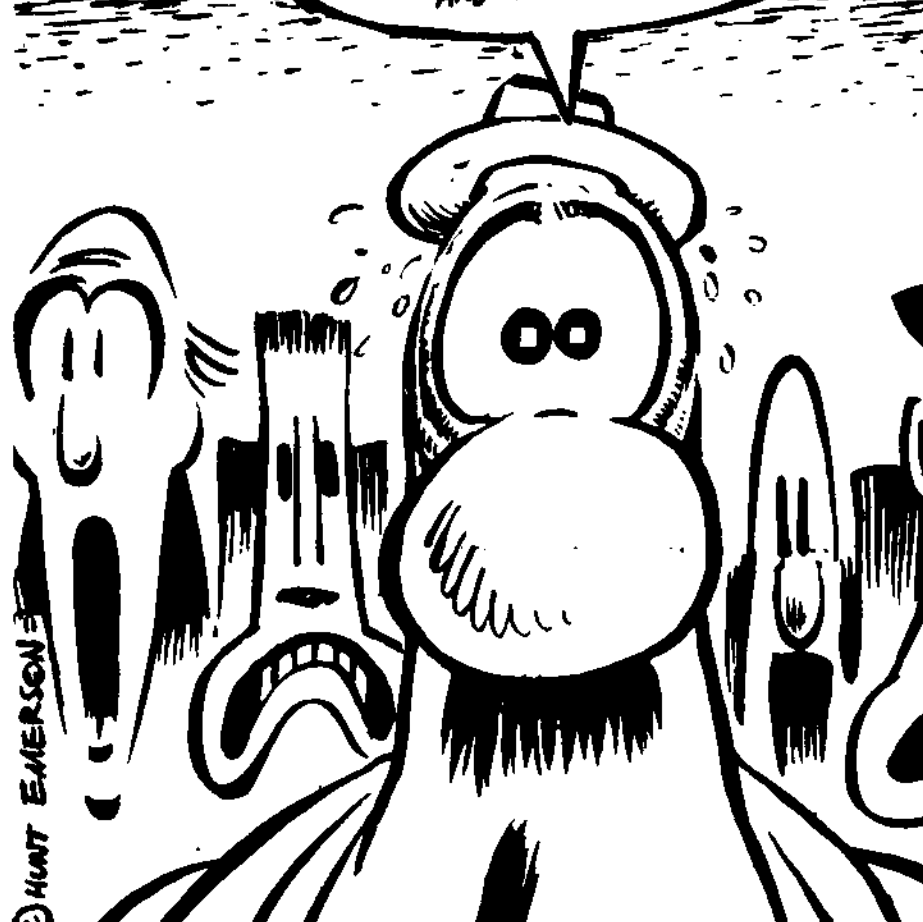
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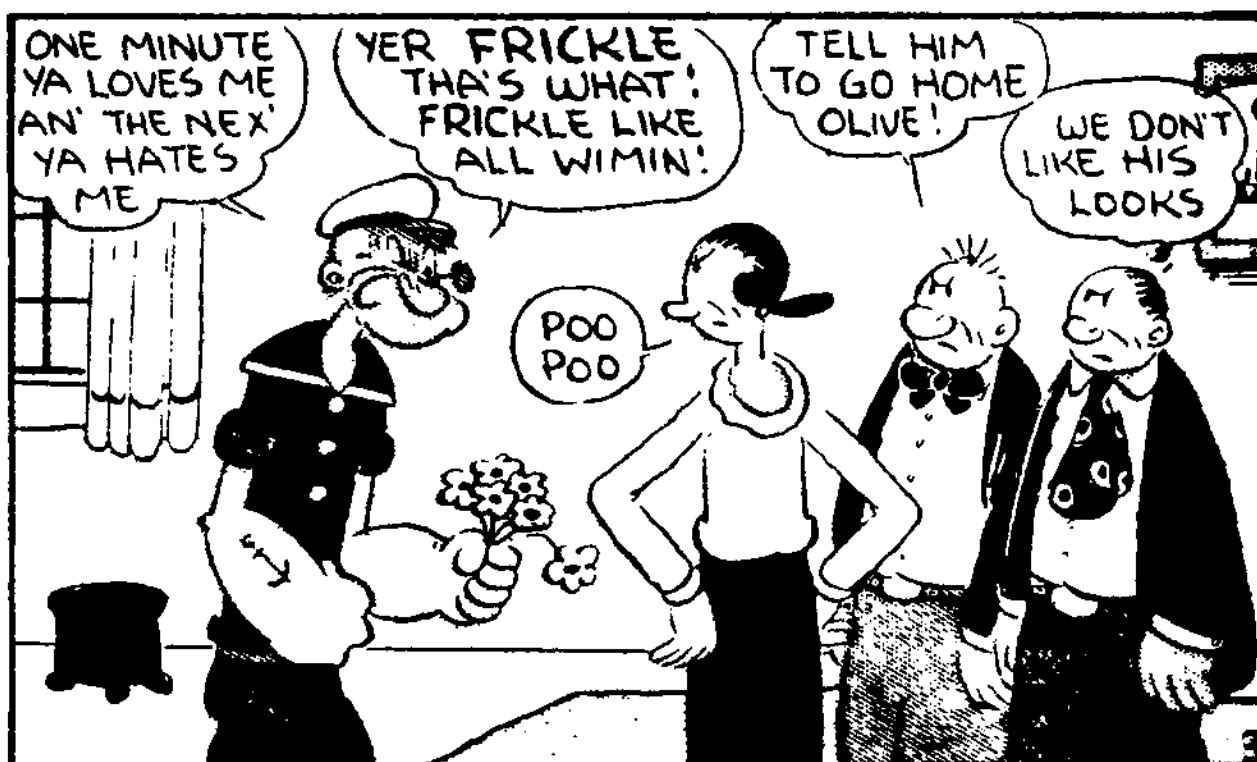
BOOK·REVUE

RUPERT ANNUAL 1985

Although Rupert has been drawn by several artists since his creation by Mary Tourtel in 1920, his place in the hearts of millions was secured by the brilliant work of Alfred Bestall who produced the strip for the **Daily Express** from 1935 until 1965. It proved extremely difficult to find a worthy successor, and as the backlog of Bestall stories reprinted in the Annuals ran out, the standard of this once classic book declined pitifully. Against this background, therefore, this new annual, the 49th, is a welcome one - in my opinion, the best for 11 years. It has a freshness and uniformity that has been lacking for too long. New stories are now written by James Henderson and drawn by John Harrold, who is far away the most talented of Bestall's successors. The first two stories are by this team, and Harrold has contributed all the extras - cover, endpapers, title-pages, etc. His style closely matches Bestall's late period as seen in the third tale, 'Rupert and the Igloo' (1952). The remaining two adventures are early Bestall, dating from 1936 and 1938 and printed for the first time in colour. His stories demonstrate many of the elements that contribute to the special magic of Bestall's Rupert: the establishment of a homely familiar setting before the extraordinary and supernatural are allowed to appear; the prominent role of Nature - fog, flowers, wind, snow, all are at the heart of these stories; the sense of menace in the person of the evil old gardener which dominates 'The Wonderful Kite', complemented by the gentle humour of 'The Igloo'. This juxtaposition of early and late Bestall allows you to study the work of one of the outstanding illustrators of this century who, in his 92nd year, is only beginning to gain the recognition he deserves. (TONY SHUKER)



Daily Express £2.25 96 pages Hardback



E.C. SEGAR The Complete E.C. Segar POPEYE, Vol. 1

This book reprints 105 colour Sunday Pages from 1930-32, but unfortunately printed in black-and-white, hence the rather poor quality. My mistake in the past has been to read Segar's strip as though it centres around Popeye's activities, which it doesn't always. No one character is the star - the interest comes from their interactions, for example the tension between Popeye and Castor Oyl. Where Popeye is tough and simple-minded, Castor acts as a rational influence, trying to check the power of Popeye's outbursts. He is skeptical where Popeye is naive, cunning where Popeye is direct. Popeye constantly beats people up and seems to have no direct reason. In the later strips by Bud Sagendorf, this phenomenon is explained away: he's strong because he eats spinach and he beats up Bluto, the 'Bad Guy'. Popeye is fiercely practical: 'If we

can't be frens, we'll be emenies'. If he can't hold Olive Oyl's hand, he'll settle for holding her foot. He always gets by. Even in jail he accepts his fate, but knocks down the wall to get some fresh air! Olive emerges as a complex, contradictory character, confusing Popeye's straightforward outlook. Though fond of her suitors, she avoids bogus sentimentality: '*Love's a lotta Hooey anyhow!*' She's also quite capable of beating up her opponents. In the Max Fleischer cartoons she was often depicted as a 'helpless heroine', but here she's a liberated feminist. Segar's characters aren't particularly pleasant - they're full of meanness and cunning. But all the same they restore my faith in human nature. They do what they can, they always manage, they always survive. (ED PINSENT)
Fantagraphics £11.95 148 pages Perfect Bound Softback

DENIS GIFFORD The International Book of Comics

It would be almost impossible to give a truly 'international' perspective on comics without becoming overcomplicated and specialist. So with the need for mass appeal and simultaneous publication in the States, Canada and Australia, Denis has dealt mainly with British and American comics, although some other countries do get a look in. His history from the nineteenth century through to undergrounds and **Heavy Metal** is necessarily concise but entertaining and is set out in thematic spreads such as Detective Comics, Jungle Kings and Queens, Horror Comics and so on. But it's the hundreds of comics cover illustrations

that make the book immediately attractive. There are 1,150 of them (and not 450 as the blurb states), a large proportion in colour. It really should have shown some examples of actual strips, but I appreciate that space is limited. It's still a wonderful opportunity to take (as Denis calls it) a '*sumptuous yet superficial rummage*' through his collection, and it's a bumper bargain when you consider the number of colour pictures. Just note that it's only available from W H Smiths. (PAUL GRAVETT)

Dean International £6.95 264 pages Hardback

THE PO OKA H MAKES 3



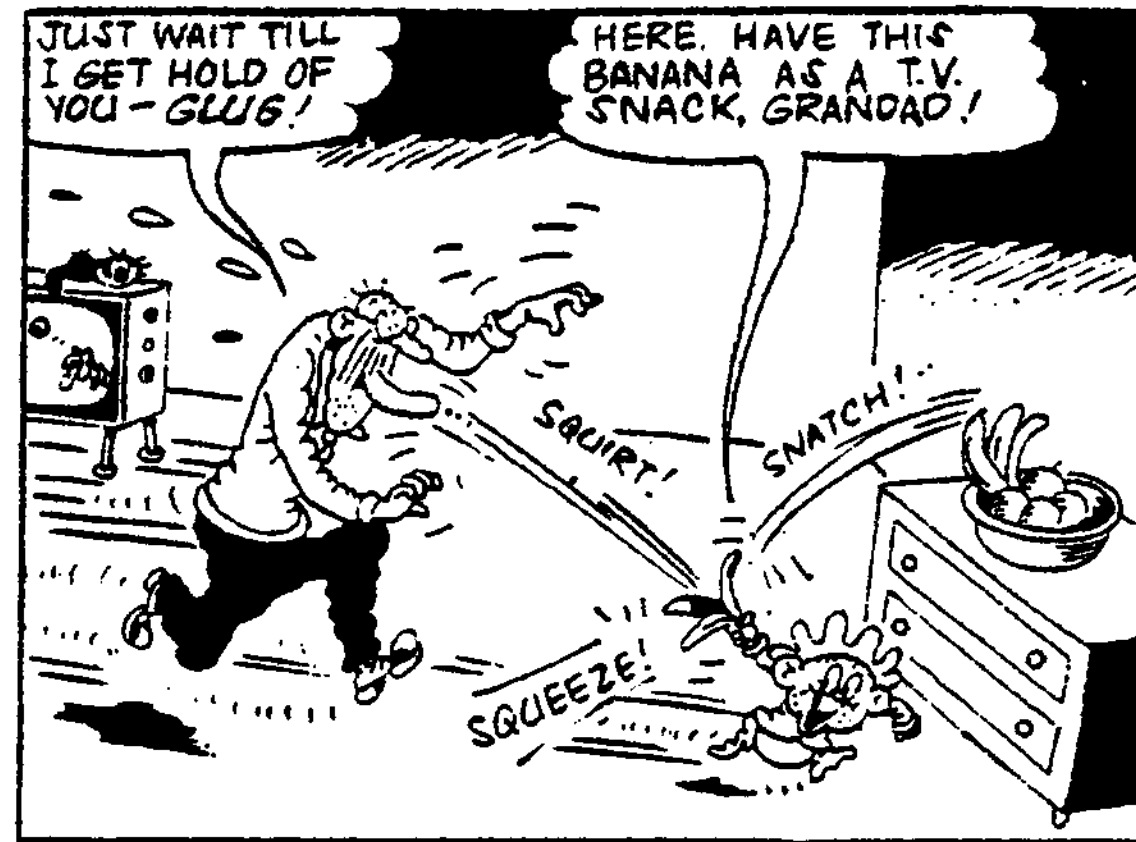
RAYMOND BRIGGS The Tin-Pot Foreign General and the Old Iron Woman

It's rare to hold in your hands a picture book that wasn't planned for your coffee-table. Raymond Briggs is one of the few British authors trying to deal with what is going on in this country in picture book form - that's rare too. His book is about the Falklands/Malvinas fiasco, about the lies which sustain hypocrisy, the jingoism masquerading as so-called 'democracy'. It's a passionate, angry book and his pictures have a clear accusing voice. Briggs' emotional conviction and his increasing mastery of the picture book form give this work a powerful visual impact. The cruel stupidity, the sheer hypocrisy of the event and its aftermath come across very clearly. However I don't think the book is an unqualified success. Perhaps Briggs decided that, since adults don't listen most of the time, his text should be simple, like an adult explaining a big subject to a child. To demystify the event he has had to simplify it, and for me this is a mistake. The war is not made between two 'baddies' or a 'baddie' against a 'goodie'. Behind this war there are premeditated economic and political reasons. This horrific event is still with us, for it to be dealt with in this simplistic way. Briggs' anger and passion are there alright, but not the idea and intention to push it further and deal with the political connotations. Even so, this book is worth more than ten coffee-table picture books. (OSCAR ZARATE)

Hamish Hamilton £2.50 52 pages Perfect Bound Softback

HAL FOSTER Prince Valiant, Vol. 26 Lithway's Law

I've always felt that Prince Valiant stands high over its contemporaries in the Adventure/Classical genre of the Newspaper Sunday, because, whereas Alex Raymond's Flash Gordon and Burne Hogarth's Tarzan were sometimes marred by juvenile simplism, Foster's work is not only impressive to look at like those, but is always interesting to read. But it's a matter of degree. The series' best period was 1938-48, culminating in the Prince, overcome by an anguished madness, abducting Aleta, Queen of the Misty Isles, and dragging her on a harrowing journey across Europe, only to have her abducted by a third party. By 1959, the period of this volume, the narrative mainly concerns Valiant,



▲ LEO BAXENDALE'S ORIGINAL 'SWEENEY TODDLER' FROM SHIVER & SHAKE, DECEMBER 8, 1973

WHOOPEE ANNUAL 1985

Ten years ago the **WHOOPEE** Annual had 160 pages; today it commands 112. But this continues the IPC tradition of giving less pages for more money. What's more the back cover features no less than a common advert! Inside only nine of the twenty regular characters currently in the weekly **WHOOPEE** comic appear. No doubt the merger with **WOW!** didn't help its compilation, as annuals are put together way in advance. So younger fans are bound to be disappointed at the absence of some of their favourites; they will probably never had heard of earlier characters like 'Daisy Jones' Locket', 'Sheerluck & Son' and 'Tom Horror's World' reprinted here. **WHOOPEE** weekly was the only IPC funny to gain in circulation recently, largely due to the

immense popularity of its cover star 'Sweeny Toddler', created by Leo Baxendale and now drawn by Tom Patterson. Yet his appearance in this annual is, I suspect, a reprint, which contains little of its present vitality and zest. Mostyn's 'Snack-Man' and 'Little Ed' are the most superior sets, being the work of IPC's most talented up-and-coming artist. 'The Bumpkin Billionaires' again does itself proud, but 'Frankie Stein' is an insult to earlier versions by Ken Reid. Behind its bright attractive cover, the annual never reaches the heights expected of the weekly comic. For the comic connoisseur it's below par, but for the kids something of a treat and still IPC's best title. (ALAN COATES)

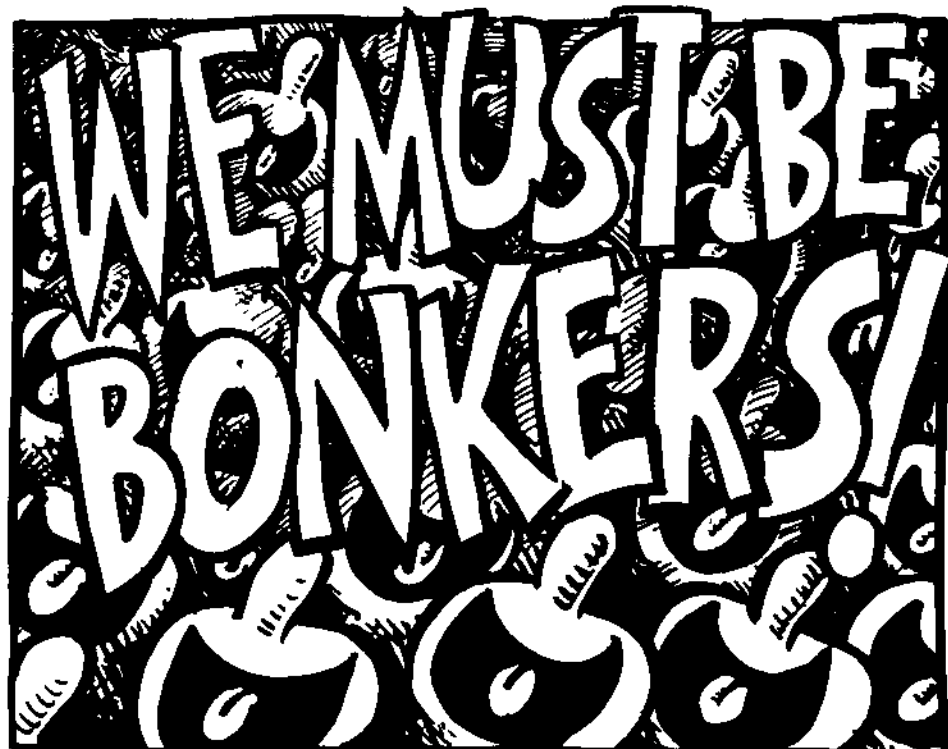
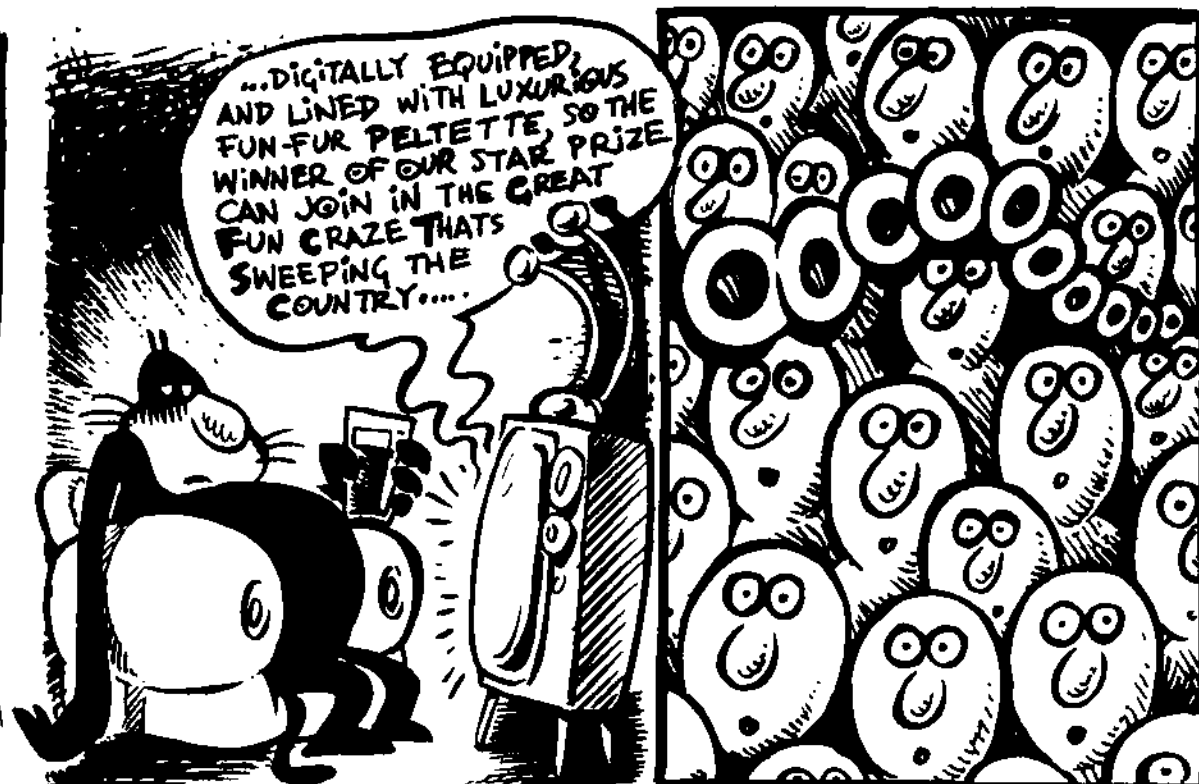
IPC £2.25 112 pages Hardback



now married to Aleta with several children, sorting out the affairs of starry-eyed lovers while having marital tiffs of his own. In Gawain's words, 'Every time I take my eye off you, you run away and play the part of a muscle-bound cupid getting likely lads tied to apron strings.' Foster also has a sense of humour, somewhat twee at times, but that's part of its appeal. As an artist, he never in his life rushed a pen-stroke; every tree, cloud and rock is put down with immaculate precision. In the '60s this led to a dogged stodginess, but in '59 the air is still breathable - just. (EDDIE CAMPBELL)

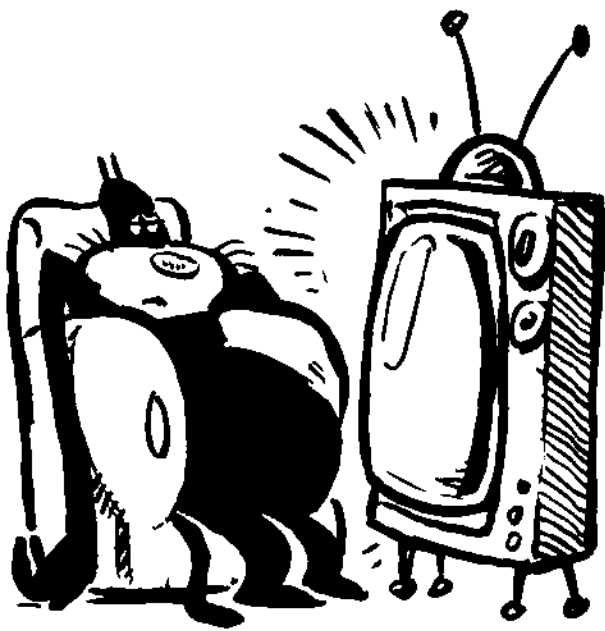
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CALCULUS CAT





by
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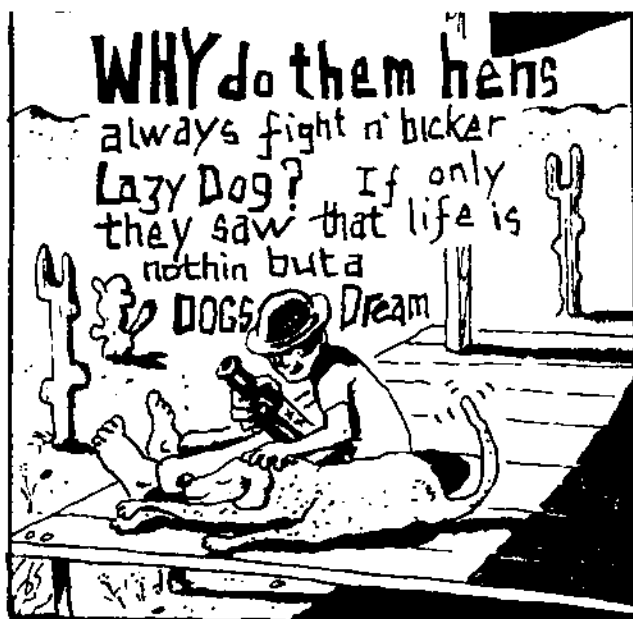




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▲ **A DOG'S DREAM** Being born in Montreal may be the closest Crispin Green has been to the American West, but his first zine captures the lazy flow of life out in the desert, drawn with long black shadows to suggest the sun's glare. Rex gets a visit from Slow Jim who invites him along to a party Betty Ross is giving in town. Rex's canine companion sets off as well to try his luck with love. Crispin's tale was originally a short story, which he's adapted into a one-panel-per-page strip, but keeping some of his text. Its gentleness and simplicity warm the heart. --44 A5 pages, 65p + post from 11 Lafone House, New Park Road, London SW2.

◊ **BLEMISH 1** brims over with neurotic scouse energy. Some of it fails to communicate, but others come over strong, particularly Bob Parker's revival of the Bizarros from '60s **Superman** comics, Frank Martin's Jackson Bollock, the world's greatest action painter and Sally Corless' Fat-Man starved in hospital. Bob plays bass and Frank 'sings' in Liverpoolian psycho-band The Mel-O-Tones. --28 A5 pages, garish silkscreened cover, 45p + post from Sit-Comics, c/o Bridewell Studios, Prescott Street, Liverpool 7.

▼ **DOCTOR DEATH/THE SAND TRAMP** Whipper-snapper writer Warren Ellis has dreamed up Dr. Death, a weird 'hero' disguised in a 'Choose Life' T-shirt, spiked haircut and sunglasses. Martin Chaplin draws him in a bold jazzy line. Then John Welding explores the windswept dunes with his tormented alien survivor. Two well-crafted fantasy serials in one zine. --2 issues so far, both 12 A5 pages, 20p + post from 11 Cedar Hall Gardens, Thundersley, Benfleet, Essex SS7 3RS.



FAST FICTION FACTS

This is a selection from the best of the small press stripzines. If you produce your own, send a copy to the Editors to be included in this section, space permitting. These and many more can be brought from the Fast Fiction Table at bi-monthly Comic Marts at Central Hall, Westminster (12 noon February 9th, April 6th and June 8th, admission free) where artists, writers and editors meet from all over the country, or by post from the Fast Fiction Sheet, available for an SAE to Escape Magazine.



◊ **GOSPEL ACCORDING TO TASTE** Jackie Smith has put her Grade 5 CSE in Religious Education to good use in her irreverent versions of Bible stories. The rest of her comic stars Daphne Doleque, who in her search for a job finds meaning with her cat Tiddles, and mohican Anarchy Andy and overpoliticised Richard Riteberk. All confidently drawn with hints of Herriman and Emerson. --40 US comic-size pages, 75p + post from 77 Greenhill Main Road, Sheffield S8 7RE.

◊ **HA! HA! HOLOCAUST** New outfit, Help! Shark Comics, bring you something to get your teeth into in this bundle of short funnies by two of the trio, Chris Flewitt and Steven Martin. They draw in a simple style like children's book illustration, but their comedy is ironic and absurd. --40 A5 pages, 45p. Steven's solo zine, **PRAIRIE DOG**, offers three stories. --24 A5 pages, 35p. Third and youngest member, Gavin Butler, has disguised his political storybook as a Penguin paperback; **MY SOFT MONSTER** is loosely drawn but effective. --16 A5 pages, 25p. Add post and order from 4 Watson's Close, Broughton, Chester CH4 0SS

◊ **PETER OUT** is one of several comics adapted by Edward Taylor and Sue Auty from their theatre performances as 'The Whalley Range All-Stars!' Together they've been putting on street shows in summer and indoor events in winter, full of humour and invention. **PETER OUT** (30p) and

A DARK TALE (15p) started life as ghost stories for their Hallowe'en evening. **WINTERTIME** (10p) comes from a lecture Edward gives playing 'Bill Beaseley, gardener ordinaire', about his unique way of growing houseplants. Add post and order from 13 Victoria Road, Whalley Range, Manchester 16.

◊ **SMALL PACKAGES** are what good things come in. In these booklets are adventures of the resourceful Augustine, told with no frills by artist/printmaker, Natalie d'Arbeloff. In No. 1 Augustine confronts her many escapes from uncertainty. In No. 2 she discovers the Ultimate Deterrent to gloom. In No. 3 she's after people's attention. Natalie takes a witty look at contemporary problems and attitudes. --Each booklet has 20 A6 pages, 50p each + post from 6 Cliffe Villas, London NW1 9AL.

▲ **THE WIMP** has a rustic air about it, perhaps due to Tim Budden and Mike Helmsley's love of the Welsh countryside. It also contains a menagerie of four-legged friends, with an emphasis on dogs with Mike's multilingual Dirkey and Sarah Downes' expose of their lives. Tim's badgers Brock and Badget act mysterious and Indra Khanna's 'Dreaming' series has a special fascination with her tales of an African childhood and an overexciting night out. Refreshing, unpredictable and -wimpish! --2 issues, both 28 A5 pages, 40p + post from 21 Claude Road, Roath, Cardiff CF2 3PZ.

FREAKMEAT

ONE NITE AT THE FAIR

MY GUTS ARE
HOWLIN' FEEDIN'
TIME BUT I JUST
GOTTA TAKE A
PEEK BEHIND THAT
THUR FLAP!!!

FREAK SHOW

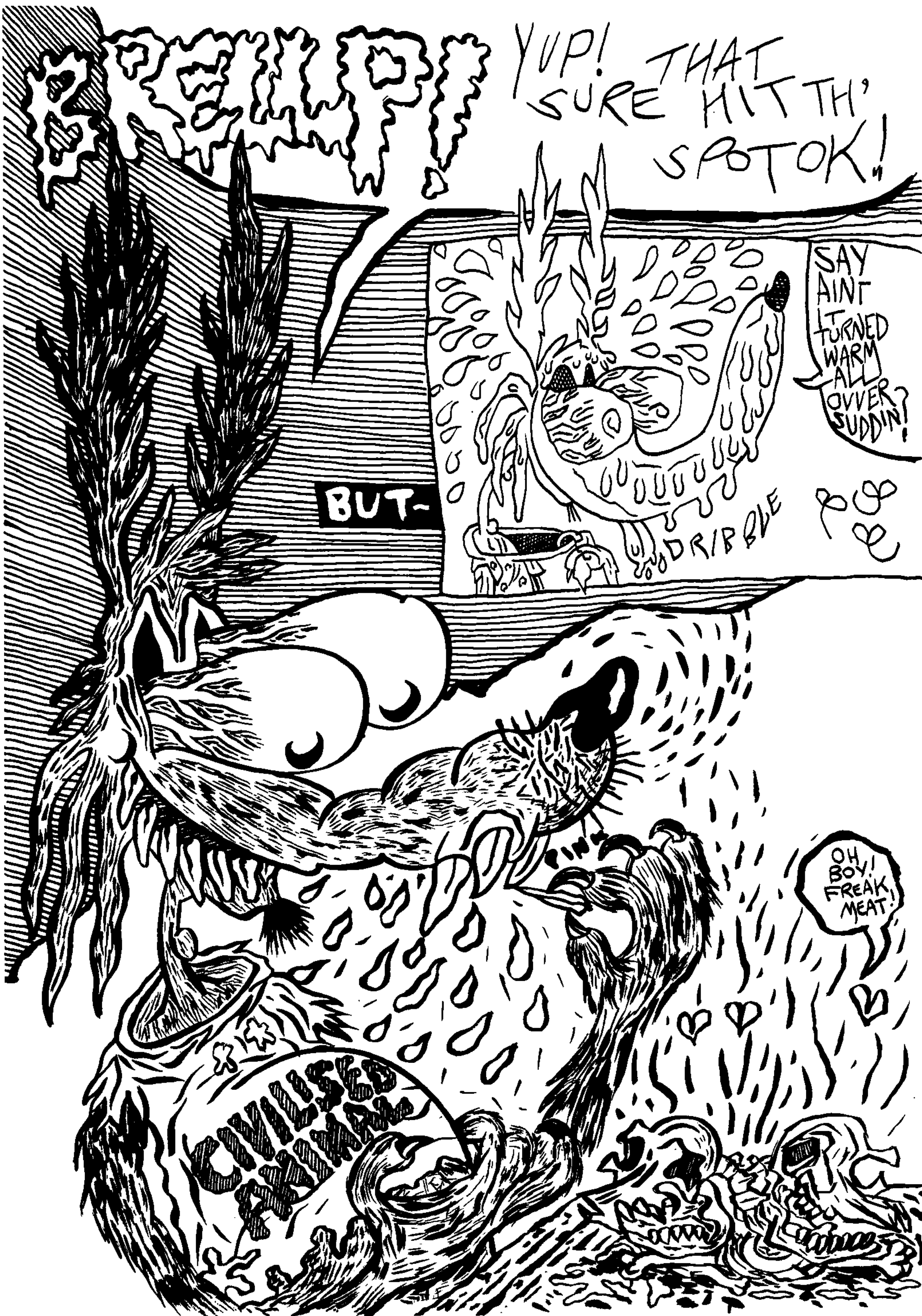
HOT DOGS

I DO
IT DOG
STYLE

HYULK-YULK! OL' MUDDER
NATURE MUSTA BIN ON L.S.D.
TO SQOIT THAT LUMPA FUCKED
UP PIGMEAT INTO THE WOILD!!







YUP! THAT
SURE HIT TH'
SPOT OK!

BUT-

SAY
AINT
IT
TURNED
WARM
ALL
OVVER?
SUDDIN!

DRIBBLE

OH
BOY!
FREAK
MEAT!





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◆ SPAGHETTI FUMETTI

You may not realise it, but if you have read **Ranxerox** by Liberatore and Tamburini serialised in **Heavy Metal**, then you have already got some idea of the sophistication of the new Italian comic or 'fumetti'. With limited space this article will take you perhaps a little

further by introducing some of the major names in Italy today. Liberatore believes that Italian artists are less hampered and more pertinent than the French, who have become lost in a nostalgia for the 'Clear Line' of Hergé. Fumetti literally translates as 'little

smokes' from the idea of speech balloons looking like puffs of smoke rising from the lips. Following my visit to Italy's International Comics Festival at Lucca, I had the chance to find out more about the varied styles and attitudes now emerging.

Paul Gravett

◆ The Great Adventure

Romance, history, high adventure, foreign climes, strange customs, men and women of action - these are some of the ingredients of a thriving genre of fumetti that is based on a tradition of solid story-telling. The adventure comic's revival in Italy began with the success in the late '70s of the weeklies **Lancio** and **Skorpio** which imported realist strips from France, South America and Britain's 'Modesty Blaise'. The popular trend before this had been humour and satire.

Italy's master of the classic adventure comic is **Hugo Pratt**, a great storyteller in the tradition of writers like Stephenson, Melville and Conrad. His life story reads like one of his 100-page albums. Born in Rimini in 1927, Pratt grew up in Ethiopia, an Italian colony at that time, moving to Venice to study Fine Art. There at the age of 17 he started Italy's first post-war comic, **Asso Di Picche** ('Ace of Spades'). He modelled his costumed crimefighter on 'The Batman' and 'The Spirit', but his strongest inspiration was to be 'Terry and The Pirates', the American adventure strip by Milton Caniff. It was from Caniff that Pratt picked up the freedom to abstract people and settings into plays of light and dark, an uninhibited use of bold black ink slapped confidently onto white paper. He also followed Caniff's example of natural dialogue, exotic settings and well-developed secondary characters



▲ FROM MICHEL LUZZI'S 'MARCEL LABRUME'

to advance the stories. In the '50s Pratt travelled to Argentina and Brazil, then worked briefly in London in the early '60s on Fleetway's pocket War Libraries, before returning to Italy. It's not surprising then that he calls himself 'a citizen of the world' and 'an international nomad'.

These descriptions also fit his most successful creation, **Corto Maltese**, a sailor of fortune in the early 1900s. Corto doesn't go looking for trouble, but his sense of chivalry and justice often force him to become involved. Wearing a gold earring and smoking a cigarillo, Corto wanders from South America to Europe in World War 1, and later to Siberia, North Africa and Venice. Pratt uses his various homelands as 'living archives' adding authentic detail to his strips. Pratt's

skilful blend of characterisation, mystery and atmosphere has made Corto successful throughout Europe. In 1983 Corto won his own monthly magazine, which also features other historical adventures by artists such as the decorative Sergio Toppi and the ironic Altan.

The other main adventure monthly is **Orient Express**, started in 1982. Two of its finest contributors, both inspired by Pratt, and geniuses with black and white are: **Attilio Micheluzzi**, whose 'Marcel Labrume', 'Petra Cherie', 'Airmail' and others have a classic Hollywood movie flavour; and **Anna Brandoli** who draws Renato Queirolo's tales of the Italian Middle Ages and is also influenced by **RAW**'s Jose Munoz, a student of Pratt's in Argentina.



▲ OPENING PANEL FROM 'THE SECRET OF TRISTAN BANTAM' BY HUGO PRATT

► The Erotic Woman

Stripteases, fetishism, sensuality, sado-masochism, sex fantasies - they all fill the pages of hundreds of trashy porno-fumetti on Italian newstands. But Italy can boast one of the world's best erotic comics artists, **Guido Crepax**. His character **Valentina** debuted in May 1965 in the second issue of the top-selling digest **Linus**, named after the 'Peanuts' character. He based her on the actress Louise Brooks, star of Pabs' film 'Lulu', with her boyish haircut and icy elegance. Her name came from Crepax' niece. Crepax thinks of his pages as a whole design, cut like stained glass and inset with enticing 'flash' panels. Reflecting his interest in psycho-analysis, he sets Valentina in a strange environment where she is haunted and often

dominated by her Freudian dreams and fantasies. **Heavy Metal** has run several episodes, as well as work by Milo Manara, a less subtle erotic artist whose drawing owes a good deal to Moebius and Bilal. Manara, Crepax and others are also translated in the lavish **Glamour International** from good specialist shops.

European Cartoonist 1, a bilingual magazine, translates Pratt, Micheluzzi and Crepax (see right) along with interviews and articles: £4.00 from Nino Bernazzali, Via G. Modugno, 5 -16156 Pegli Genova. Only one Corto Maltese story, 'Lagoon of Beautiful Dreams', is in English in a 1972 colour edition, 24 large-format pages: \$9.50 + post from Tony Raiola, PO Box 14361, Long Beach, CA 90803.



► The Brutal Reality

1968 marked the start of an era of youth unrest in Italy, with Bologna, the country's pumping heart, as the centre of new ideas. But this period was brought to an end in the Spring of 1977 after the defeat of the student occupation of the University of Bologna. After this final blaze died down, many young people felt left out in the cold. In response, two contrasting but complimentary movements of comic artists sprang up.

The first group were centred around two 'underground' magazines; **Il Male** ('The Bad') filled with angry derisive satire and **Cannibale** ('Cannibal') which, as its title implies, had a self-destructive feeling, bitter, aggressive, 'no future', living now, without hope, for sex, money and drugs. Out of these titles grew the glossy monthly **Frigidaire** in 1980, christened after a make of refrigerator and continuing the image of cold despair. Fumetti make up only part of **Frigidaire's**

contents, with many pages given over to sensational articles, offbeat interviews, searing political commentary and short stories. Much of **Frigidaire's** success has been thanks to **Ranxerox**, who first appeared in **Cannibale** written and drawn by Stefano Tamburini, before Tanino Liberatore took over the



▲ FROM SCOZZARI'S 'BLUE DAHLIA'

artwork. Liberatore's intense hyper-realism brought Tamburini's passionate punk Frankenstein vividly to life and made him internationally successful, serialised in **Heavy Metal** and published in two albums by Catalan Communications. Publishers are now demanding a third book, but so far only the first 6 pages of 'I, ME MINE Corporation' have appeared, as Liberatore is tired of the character, who is not his own, and prefers doing illustrations.

But there are other **Frigidaire**

successes, such as **Filippo Scozzari** who has adapted Raymond Chandler's 'Blue Dahlia' in an Eisner style and a bizarre novel by Tomasso Landolfi in lurid almost fluorescent colours. And there's **Andrea Pazienza**, a young philosophy student and street poet, who quickly became a superstar for his topical stories of youth, 'Pentothal' and 'Zanardi'. His crazy, satirical, drug-related fumetti are drawn deliberately in a variety of ways, sometimes in a loose cartoony style, sometimes with detailed rendering like early Moebius, and even in full colour paintings, but always with unstable extremes of comedy and passion.

The other important innovator is **Massimo Mattioli**, now making a name for himself with his 'Squeak the Mouse', a silent perverse hybrid of Tex Avery funny animals and XX-rated splatter movies. He's also drawing distorted versions of the clichés of American '60s comics in his series, 'Tales of Fear'. **Frigidaire** also published **Chris Long's** earliest strips under his pen-name, John O. London.



▲ SQUEAK'S REVENGE BY MATTIOLI



◆ The Dynamic Future



▲ FROM 'DOCTOR NEFASTO' BY LORENZO MATTOTTI

In contrast to **Frigidaire**, the second group of artists based in Bologna founded a publication in 1978 to research new expressions of comics. Its title revealed their response - **Il Pinguino** ('The Penguin'), a creature that can survive and live in the cold, a more optimistic symbol. In 1983 through a co-operative agency called **Storiestrice** ('Story-Strip') they appeared in their own supplement in **Alter Alter**. By this time the group's name had become **Valvoline**, a brand of motor oil, and their supplement was subtitled **Motor Comics**, giving a sense of speed and motion, looking ahead. Their experimental work received mixed reactions. **Lorenzo Mattotti**, one of the artists, explains, "It's not easy proposing this new point of view, because comics readers are conservative - they want to read in a hurry, understand and consume as soon as possible." Their work broke away from comics' traditions and restructured them by bringing in influences of Fine Art, new literature, films, music, fashion and video technology.

After he quit his architecture studies,

Mattotti took up fumetti with Jose Munoz as one of his teachers. He has produced a number of outstanding stories, notably 'Signor Spartaco', in which he explores his character's internal reality, as his external reality gives way to psychological fantasy and nightmare. Appropriately his panels often look like expressionistic sets out of 'The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari'. His stories are inspired by Wim Wenders' movies and the writing of Peter Handke, Max Frisch and others. His sensitive treatment of colour is influenced by Cezanne, Seurat and more recently Hopper and Hockney.

Giorgio Carpinteri takes his inspiration from the Italian movement of Futurism. His artwork is angular, geometric, exaggerated and brilliantly coloured, evoking also the Memphis style of furniture. His main series are the dwarf detective 'Fredd' and 'Thin Wrists' seen briefly in **RAW** 5. He has also illustrated stories by Brolli and Kramsky, two writers in the group.

Igort, real name Igor Tuveri, has a passion for fashion, especially the exotic costumery of comics like Flash

Gordon and modern Italian design, emphasising an updated Thirties look like Kid Creole.

Marcello Jori re-works photographs with watercolours, giving them an unearthly glowing quality, to tell disturbing photo-novellas. The newest member of the group is American artist **Charles Burns**, seen in **RAW** and **Heavy Metal**, who now lives and works in Rome.



▲ IGORT'S 'PARADOR STYLE'

Another aspect of **Valvoline** is their involvement not only in comics but in many other art forms, designing music videos, theatre pieces, record sleeves, fashion illustration. More recently they have been appearing in **Frigidaire**. Perhaps this is a tacit admittance by **Frigidaire** that times have changed and that the magazine must change too. The **Valvoline** group bring new hope with their richness of ideas and vision of the dynamic future. Their time has come to lead the way.

Obviously this article can only introduce a few of Italy's important artists and while we wait for more of them to be put into English, you can sample the original fumetti available from Moroni & Son, 68 Old Compton Street, London W1.



▲ GIORGIO CARPINTERI'S 'FILIPPO'

SCIENCE, *fun* & POLITICS

featuring:

DOC CHAOS

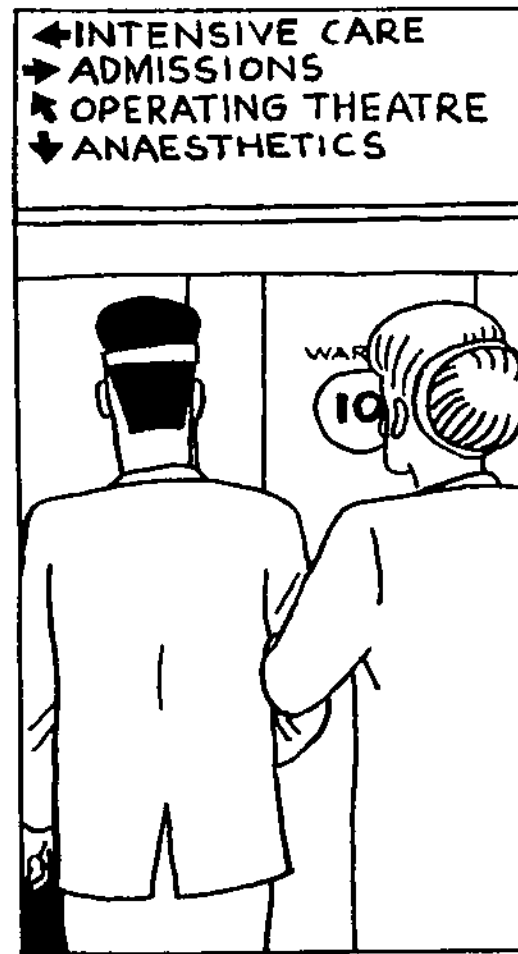
and REYNARD
our foxy-featured
intrepid reporter!

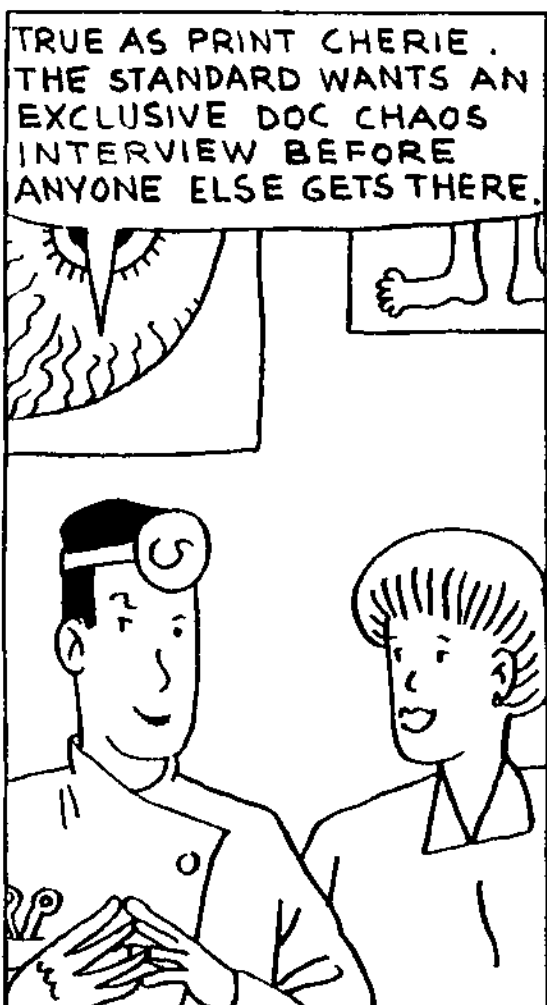
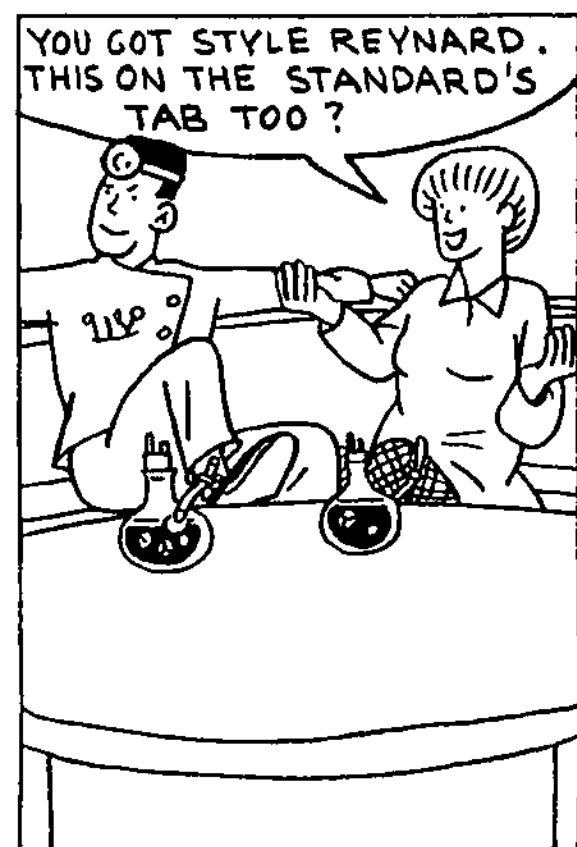
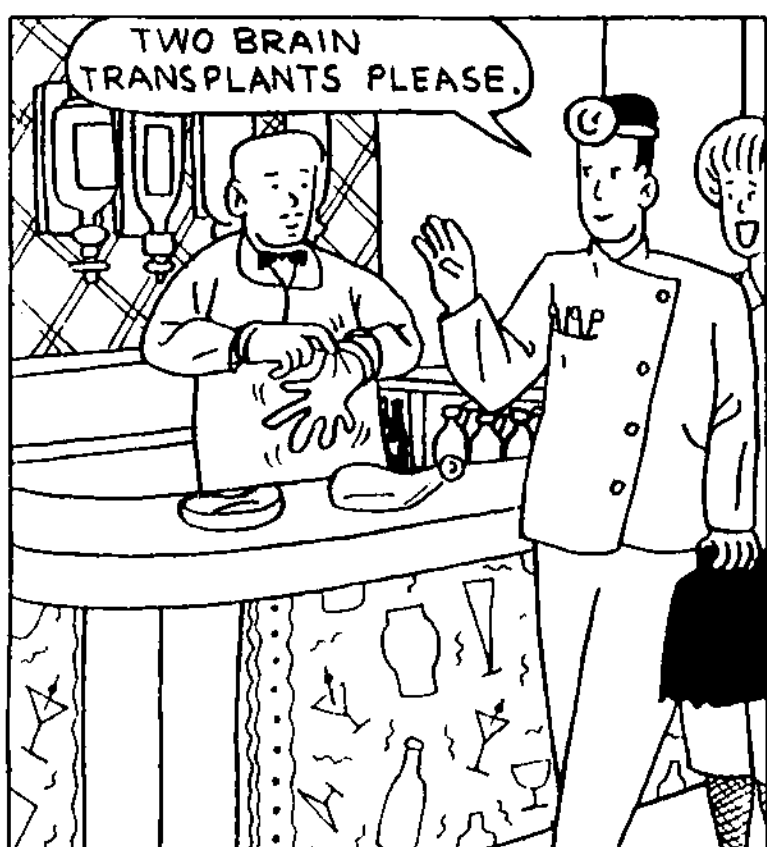
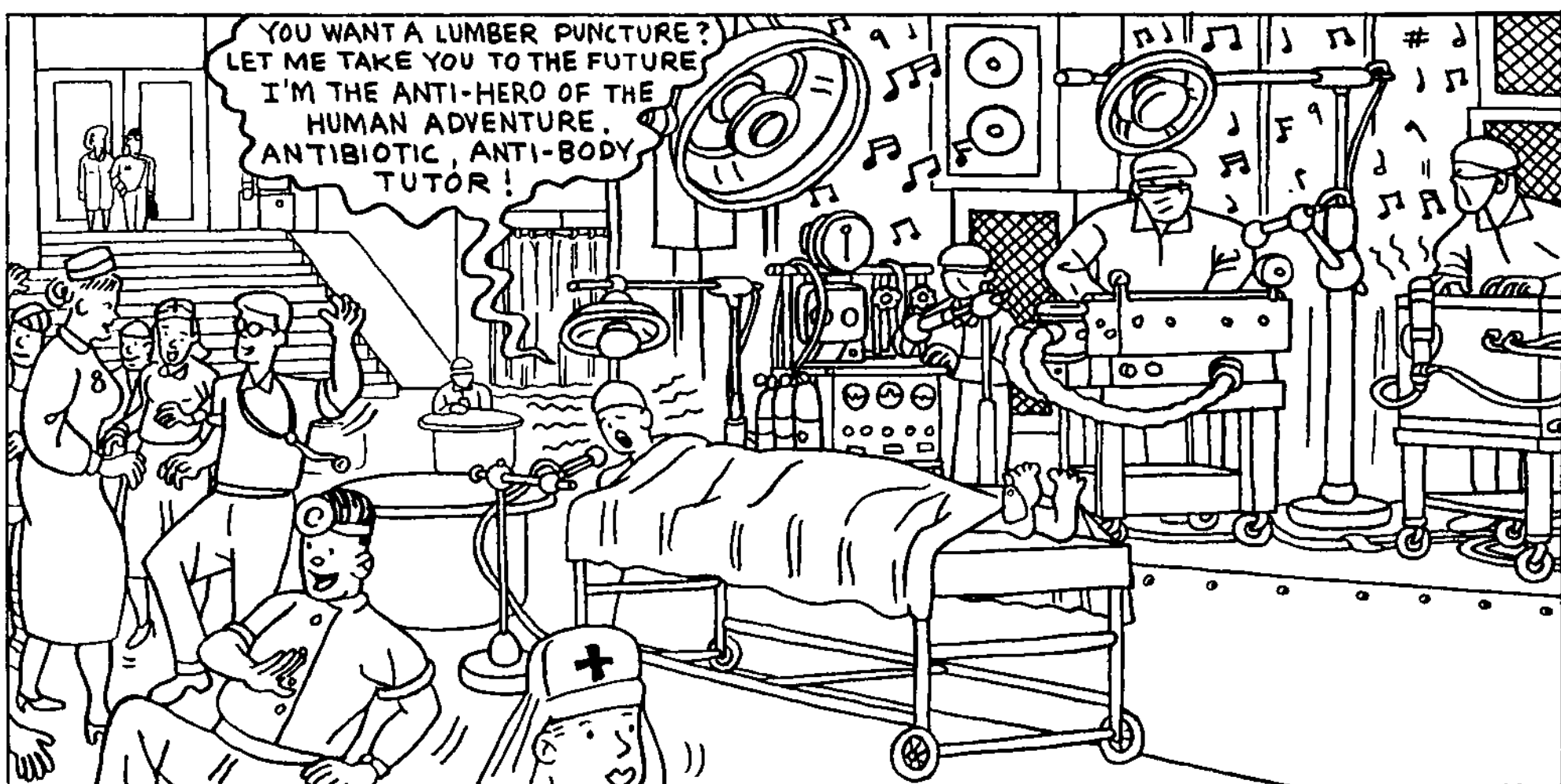
JOHNNY
and the
SURGEONS
tonight

DOCTOR CHIC

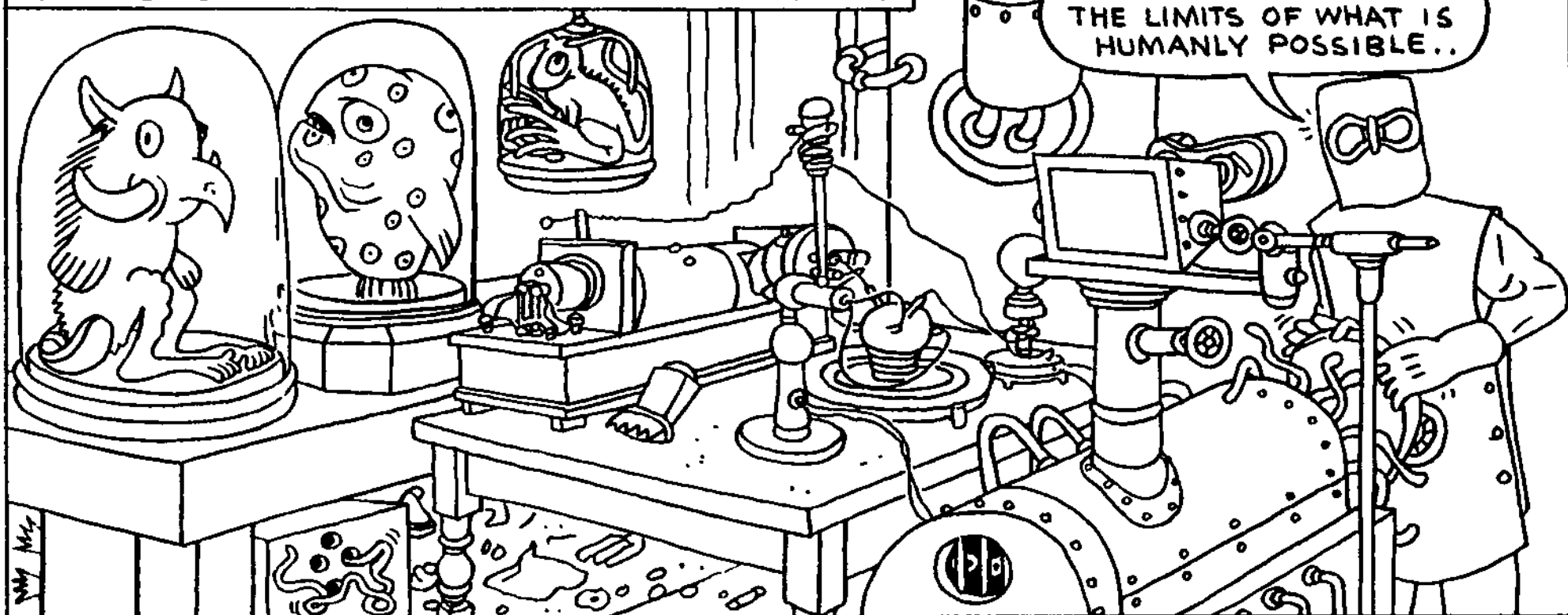
CLINIC
LONDON'S HEALTHIEST NIGHTSPOT

WOW, REYNARD.
I'VE BEEN WAITING
TO COME HERE
FOR AGES!





YOU KNOW DOC CHAOS WAS HOUNDED OUT OF THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION FOR UNETHICAL PRACTICES ...



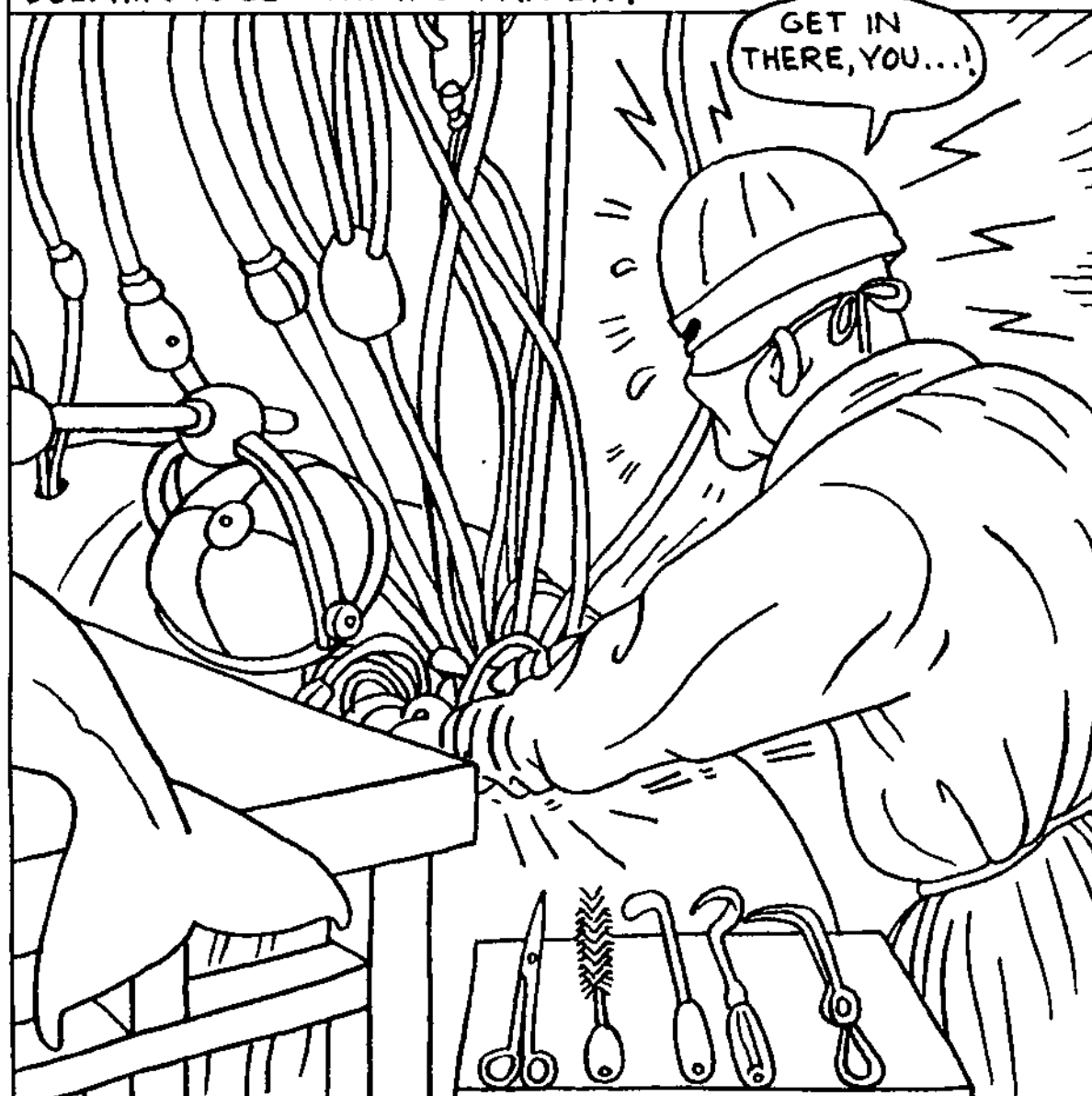
ONE REASON WHY THE DOC'S ALWAYS CHANGING BODIES IS TO AVOID ALL THOSE EX-PATIENTS AFTER BLOOD FOR SOME CRAZY OP'S/H E SET ON THEM.



GET A MOVE ON, FOR CHRISAKES, THEY'LL BE HERE SOON!!



LIKE THE WOMAN WHO CAME TO HIM WITH AN INGROWING TOENAIL AND THE DOC IMPLANTED THE FOETUS OF A DOLPHIN TO SEE WHAT'D HAPPEN.



WHAT HAPPENED?!

IT DIED.



TOO BAD. COULD'VE BEEN GOOD.

SLURP!



BUT ONE OF THE PARTS I LIKE BEST IS THE EXPERIMENTS IN SOCIAL ENGINEERING.



EVE SAYS
AN APPLE
A DAY
KEEPS
GOD AWAY

GENE
TRANSPLANT
THEATRE
→

NEXT ENTER
WHEN LIGHT
FLASHES



LIE STILL. YOU'RE
GONNA ENJOY THIS!

ANT
RE

ER
HT
ES

CHAOS WORKED ON DNA MANIPULATION TO INCREASE
THE NUMBER OF NYMPHOMANIACS AROUND!



THEN PLANTED THEM WITH
RANDOMISED GENE PATTERNS
AND WAS GOING TO LET
THEM LOOSE AMONG THE
UPPER CLASSES.

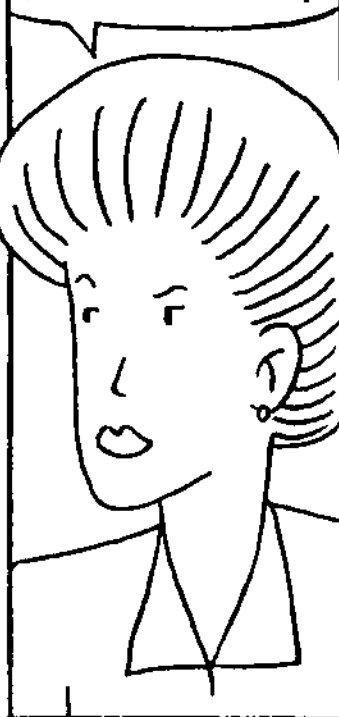


HELLO GORGEOUS!
WHERE'SH YOU
BEEN ALL MY
LIFE = HIC = !

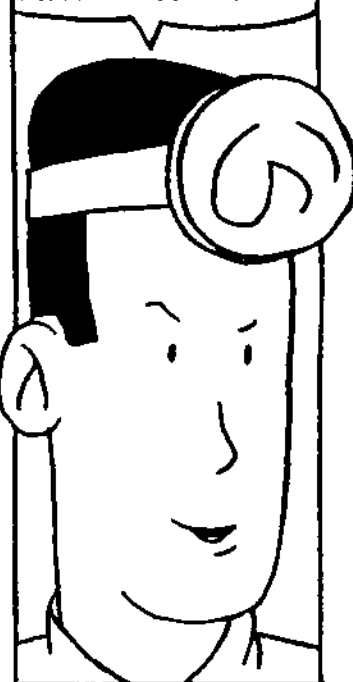
PRETTY SOON YOU'D HAVE A GENERATION OF
COMPLETE MORONS AND MUTANTS.



ISN'T THAT WHAT
YOU'VE GOT NOW?



I DON'T THINK
YOU'VE SEEN
ANYTHING YET!





DOC CHAOS SEZ ... 'For de purpose of increasing scientific knowledge, I's conducting research into kissing an' looking for volunteers. Any offers?'

From 'OMNIPOTENCE', The Autobiography of Doc Chaos, Chapter 9: 'Lip-Reading By Braille'

COMICS ★ USA

An impossibly rich celebrity's guide BY ALAN MOORE

○22nd August, Wednesday

It's insufferably hot in Northampton and I can't sleep. Upon the very brink of slumber I am jarred awake by a sudden apocalyptic vision of monstrous towering buildings such as might have been designed by Fritz Lang after an undercooked Chicken Dhansak. New York. Oh Christ, what have I done? I don't want to go. I'll pretend I'm poorly... Clutched fast within the hairy fist of anxiety I crawl beneath the duvet and sob till morning.

○24th August, Thursday

My taxi to Heathrow arrives driven by comic's answer to Robert de Niro, Jamie Delano, who combines scripting 'Nightraven' and 'Captain Britain' with taxi work. Phyllis and the children Amber and Leah make a brave attempt at concealing the turbulent emotions aroused in them by my departure, but I can tell that they are secretly heartbroken. My flight is a seven hour sneak preview of purgatory. I read Alexei Sayle's 'Train to Hell' from cover to cover. I'm sitting in the central aisle and I can't see out of the window. What's the point of flying if you can't see how many thousands of feet you've got to fall shrieking to your death? After touching down at Kennedy airport, I suffer the indignity of waiting in line for an hour with a lot of ordinary human beings before I'm allowed through customs. As I approach the customs point I become nervous. But my quite understandable terror of detainment and rigorous rectal probing evaporates when I see that the customs official looks like Henry from 'Hill Street Blues'. Now I know that I will be alright. Waiting for me is my Limo driver who insists on taking me into New York by a special route obviously reserved for his more exclusive clients. One and a half hours later we are lodged in a traffic jam, where we have been for sixty minutes, and the driver is apologising furiously. He tells me that amongst Englishmen he admires Matt Munroe and Benny Hill. I tell him that, yes, they do enjoy a certain reputation back home.

Ten minutes later he drops me off outside the Warner Communications building on Fifth Avenue. Taking the elevator up to the DC Comics offices, I find the reception and step inside. As I do so I register that someone is sitting just inside the door, behind me, reading a magazine. When I glance round I find myself looking at a life-sized mannequin of Clark Kent. This does nothing for my already tenuous grasp on reality and seems a thoughtless prank to play on a jet-lagged foreigner. The office walls are covered with sunshine yellow enlarged Letratone dots. After the first ninety seconds, this becomes migraine visible. On the door of the men's toilet is a Superman symbol, with Wonder Woman's emblem on the door of the ladies'.

Finally I arrive at the office of my editor on **Swamp Thing**, Karen Berger. This is the first time I've met Karen. Hitherto she has only been a voice over the transatlantic cable. In person she is angelic, both of countenance and disposition, looking after me while I'm in New York and making sure I don't get eaten by subway cannibals or end up sleeping on a grating. Also in the office is John Totleben, who inks **Swamp Thing**. Other than a perpetually blue jaw, he looks almost normal. This is something that I always find unsettling about certain artists. They appear on the surface to be such nice ordinary guys, but having seen their work you know that deep down inside they're unhinged. Despite this I walk with him to our hotel, where the New York

Creation Convention is being held over the weekend. We reach John's room and I'm introduced to his wife Michelle, who's far too nice to have known what he did for a living when she married him. Steve Bissette, who pencils **Swamp Thing**, has still not arrived, but since Steve exists outside the Einsteinian concept of time and space, nobody seems surprised. I go down to my room meanwhile and settle in.



The room is big enough to induce mild agoraphobia even in a non-sufferer. I find I'm only able to sleep about three hours a night in it. There is an intimidating air-conditioner unit, which takes me two days to realise I can switch off, and there is a little plate informing me that I should keep the door double-locked at all times and always look through the peephole before answering it, in case it's a bag lady with a meat cleaver and a shopping bag full of index fingers. At six I go down to the lobby. As I step out of the elevator, Steve Bissette steps in, with his wife Nancy and daughter, Maia. He quickly introduces himself before the elevator whisks them up to their room. He says he'll be down in five minutes. Half an hour later I'm still waiting with Karen Berger and John and Michelle Totleben. Just as I'm checking the time of my flight back to Heathrow, the Bissettes turn up and we go out to a Japanese restaurant. Later Karen walks us back to the hotel, we all say goodnight, and I retire to my room to listen until morning for distant gunshots. Unfortunately, the air conditioning is too loud and I pass the night without hearing a single murder.

○25th August, Saturday

I wake up after two hours sleep and order the full continental breakfast. This turns out to be two slices of toast, a glass of juice that is 90% ice and a miniature pot of ►



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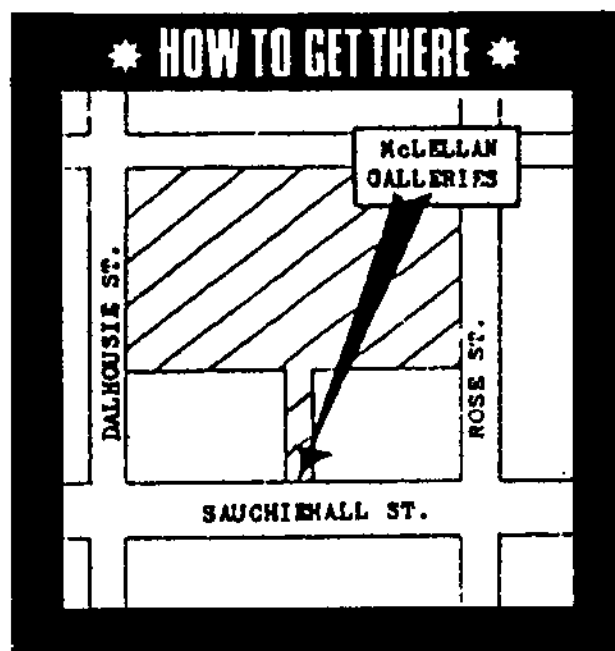
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CONVENTION

▷ tea. There is also a flower floating elegantly in a glass of water. Thank God I ordered the full breakfast, rather than just one slice of toast and a couple of petals. I go and see how the convention's shaping up. I meet Steve and John and we wander round the stalls. The cattle market atmosphere is exactly the same as that at most British comic marts, the mesmerized brain-slaves herded between mountains of tempting consumables. I encounter Marv Wolfman, who tells me he's received his first death threat from a fan - someone who objects to Marv killing the woman he loved. This would be understandable, apart from the fact that the woman was a **Teen Titan** and a totally fictitious character incapable of returning their affection. I know Frank Miller has had four death threats so far for his killing of Elektra. The four of us - Me, Steve, John and Karen - are due to deliver a **Swamp Thing** panel this morning. We find the room just as the Marvel panel is finishing. I run into Louise Simonson, wife of Walt Simonson, who writes **Power Pack** for Marvel, about the only one written for kids not neurotic adolescents. It reads like an Alan Garner book and with June Brigman's crisp clean artwork it's one of the few American comics created entirely by women. The **Swamp Thing** panel goes well, despite the fact that the audience seem prepared to laugh whenever I open my mouth, whether I am saying anything amusing or not. Does the mere possession of an English accent confer Oscar Wildean qualities (by which I mean wit rather than bad teeth and homosexuality) upon the speaker in the ears of the American public?

At mid-day I meet Julius Schwartz and we walk over to the apparently legendary Carnegie Delicatessen. When I read **The Flash** and **Green Lantern** at the age of seven, Julius Schwartz had his name down as editor. I knew his name before Elvis Presley's. It was his strong, individual editorial tone that gave DC Comics of that period their unique atmosphere. Being a megalomaniac of some stature myself, I obviously feel awed by very few people, and Julius Schwartz happens to be one of them. Upon meeting me he takes the piss mercilessly out of my accent. This callous humiliation of a foreigner strikes me as an endearing British trait, and we hit it off immediately. Julie orders me a corned beef sandwich, that consists of two slices of white bread with a mound of beef between approximately the size of Micky Rooney.

In the afternoon, back at the convention, Rick Veitch arrives with his wife Cindy. Rick has done sterling fill-in episodes of **Swamp Thing** and the two of us are planning to do a story for **Epic Illustrated**. In the evening we are all taken out to a 'Rib Joint'. After dinner we walk through SoHo and find a comic shop called SoHozat that's still open even though it's 11.30 at night. A massive scruffy place, piled high with comics that are as far away from the American mainstream as it's possible to get. Walking in I'm confronted with a copy of Eddie Campbell's **Alec** with my name on the cover. It's disorientating to stumble on a place at random in New York, in the dead of night, and find your name waiting for you. I buy a Mark Beyer mini-comic starring 'Amy and Jordan' and an obscure volume written by Kathy Acker. I also find a book entitled 'The Water-Bag Couple' which appears to be about enema bondage rituals, but I decide I'd better put it back. We return to the hotel and I lie awake till morning.

○26th August, Sunday

Badly disorientated from lack of sleep but putting on a brave face I breakfast at the Carnegie Deli with Steve and John. The rest of the day we hang out at the convention, and in the afternoon we head over to the Upstart Studio, where Walt Simonson and Howard Chaykin work. I spend

time talking to Walt, who's working on **Thor** for Marvel and may be the first person to work on the series with any feel for Norse mythology. We meet up with his wife Louise and Len Wein, co-creator of the first **Swamp Thing**, and go eat Mexican Food. Afterwards, it's back to the Simonson's place for ice cream. Walt shows me his word processor and says I should get one, even though I explain that Britain is still not entirely warmed up to the industrial revolution, and that even people who possess electric toasters are still regarded as warlocks in many parts of the country. I will probably never even buy an electric typewriter. I return to the hotel. I've got to get out of this place. I think I'm going mad!

○27th August, Monday

Before I get up I read through **Mister X**, a comic by the Brothers Hernandez. It's a stunning piece of work, all set in a huge psychotic city with buildings out of all proportion to the inhabitants. The hero is a detective who never sleeps. It's funny, when I was a kid I always used to identify with the healthy characters

I go to Julie Schwartz office at DC to talk about the **Superman** annual that me and Dave Gibbons will be doing. As I explain the plot he starts throwing in ideas, all good ones. I understand why his editorship made such a difference to DC during its early years. Later, me, Steve and John chat with Dick Giordano, about what we'd like to do in **Swamp Thing**, such as the special vegetable-erotica issue, No. 34, titled 'Swamp Lust'. Leaving DC, I go with the Tottlebens and the Bissettes to pick up the car for the trip to Vermont, where I'll be staying a couple of days at Steve and Nancy's home. We break the journey at the Connecticut mansion of Fantagraphics, who publish **Love and Rockets**, and **The Comics Journal**, where we meet publisher Gary Groth, Kim Thompson and the rest of the crew. Their hospitality is excellent, though Gary looks frazzled. Apart from the fact that Fantagraphics is moving to California in a few weeks, **The Comics Journal** is currently involved in a lawsuit with comics writer Michael ▷



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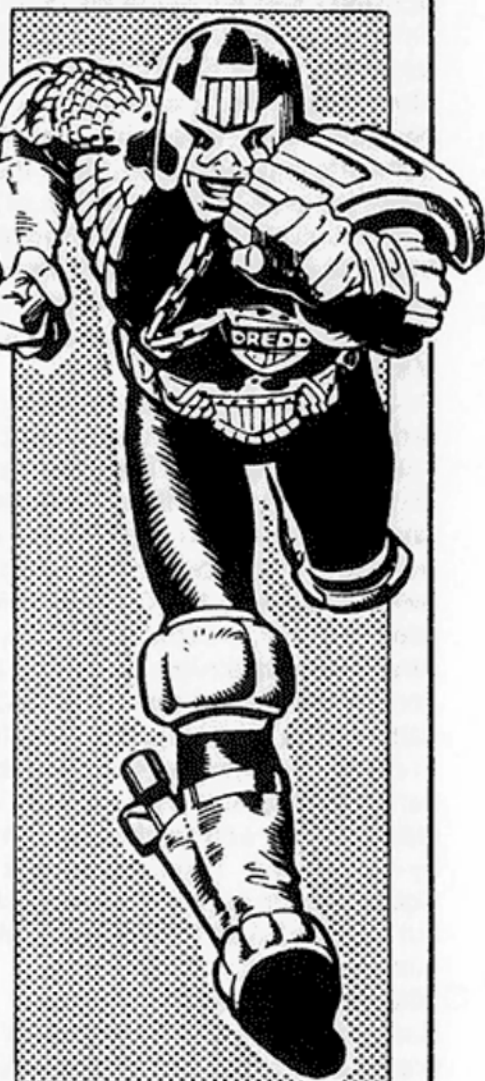
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BRITAIN'S FOREMOST PUBLISHER OF GRAPHIC NOVELS

▷Fleisher, author of **Jonah Hex**, after the magazine allegedly cast doubts on his sanity during an interview with writer Harlan Ellison. In my sleepless state this lawsuit is just another example of the strange thrashings that the mainstream comics industry is going through here. Pacific Comics, a large independent publisher, has collapsed and every week there is a minor eruption - an argument over rights, a worsening of relationships between DC and Marvel, a new company or artist emerging full of promise. The industry is going through some growing pains, put off since 1963, and I shall be interested to see what emerges, although any number of headless bodies may be left along the way.

Eventually we reach the Bissette's log-cabin deep in the woods. I crawl into Maia's playroom and miraculously fall asleep. Why can I sleep in Vermont but not in New York? They're probably using subliminal rays in New York. These people are Americans and they aren't above that sort of thing.

○28th August, Tuesday

Vermont is beautiful - just woods, mountains, isolation and clean air. During the morning me, Steve and John take Maia for a walk in the woods and talk over the upcoming stuff in **Swamp Thing**: the menstrual werewolf and the horrible reproductive cycle of underwater vampire bats. What a way for grown men to make a living. The afternoon dissolves into a pleasant blur of beer, smoke and sweetcorn.

○29th August, Wednesday

Another good night's sleep. Will I be able to adjust to New York again? We drive to the airport and I say goodbye. 'Goodbye'. The time I've spent in Vermont is probably the most relaxing and pleasant of my entire trip. Back at New York airport I am immediately assailed by the sheer physical presence of the city. Vermont might as well be on another planet. After dinner I return to my Hotel to lie wide awake all through the night listening to the ice cubes melting in the bucket.

○30th August, Thursday

I go to the Carnegie Deli for breakfast and then manage to walk all the way to the DC offices without getting shot or sexually assaulted. After lunch Lynne Verucci turns up and I go with her over to the studios to prepare a video of myself to be shown at conventions this autumn. This is not my idea you understand. From the studio I take a cab across town to meet Howard Chaykin and Leslie Zahler who create

▲**American Flagg!** I'm taken out to dinner and we're later joined by Frank Miller and Lynne Varley who both worked on **Ronin**. Frank and Howard are two of the most exciting talents in comics at the moment. Both of them have an aura of enthusiasm for comics and feel, like I do, that the medium is in an interesting state of flux where almost anything is possible.

After the meal we walk back to my Hotel. This is my last night in New York. I stay awake for its duration in order to fully savour it.

○31st August, Friday

In the morning I meet Frank Miller and we call up at the Marvel offices, a curious place. The people seem friendly enough, but the atmosphere is very different to the informal cheeriness of DC. The centre of the floor is given over to drawing boards and labouring artisans, while the offices leading off from the main area are apparently the kind that you knock and wait at the door of, before entering. This is probably simple company bias on my part, but with Marvel I did get the impression of a company who make the trains run on time. I don't seem to have an awful lot to say to Marvel and they don't seem to have much to say to me.

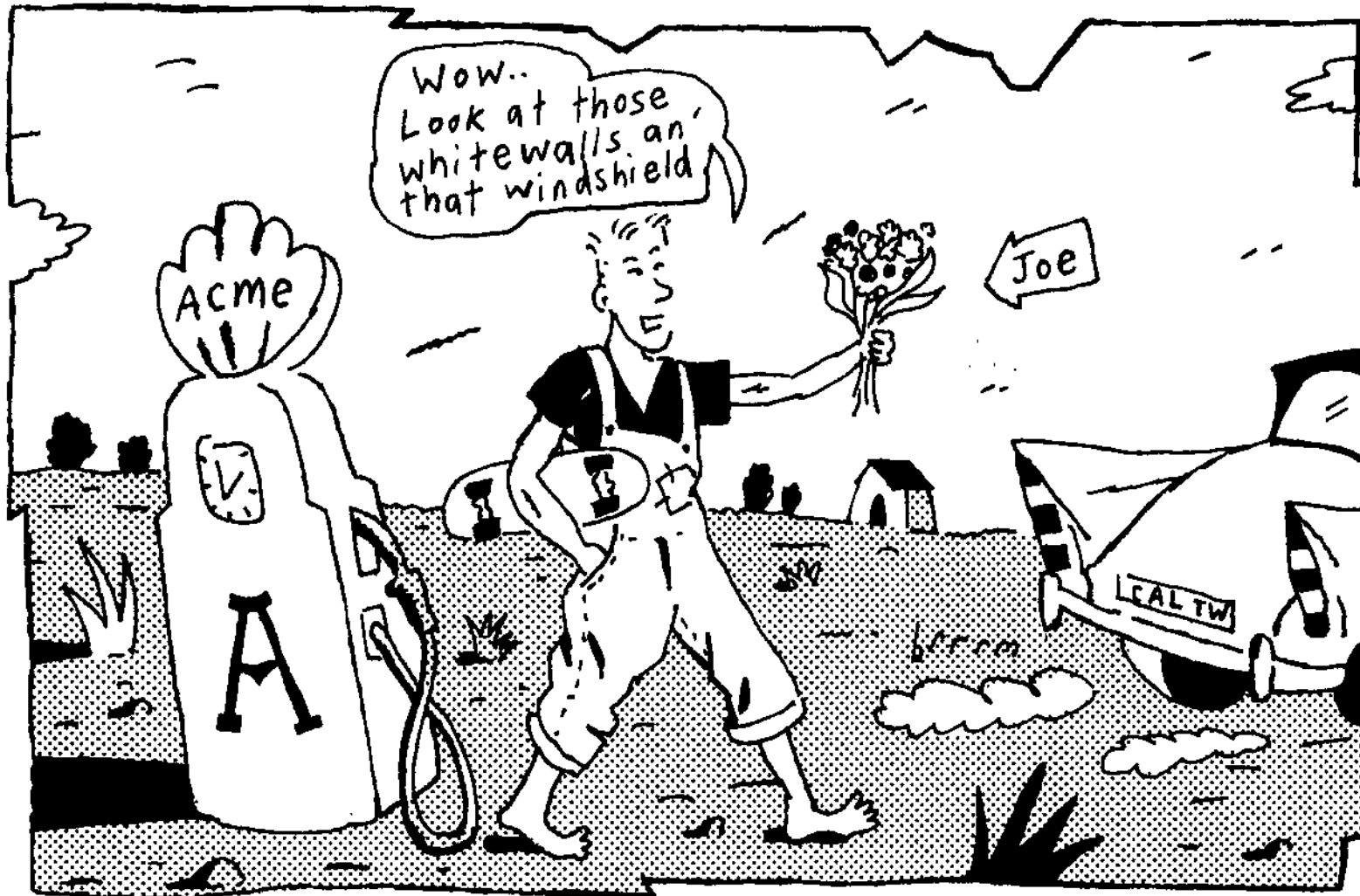


Afterwards, me and Frank call in at a bar and down some sandwiches and beer. Talking to him, I feel a strong affinity of approach; he tells me about his forthcoming **Batman** series for DC, his face contorting into the different emotions of his characters as he describes them. This is something I do myself, and it comes from a near-unbalanced degree of involvement. Frank tells me that Howard Chaykin's approach is totally different. Howard is very cool and calculating in his construction, or at least that's how it looks to me. Frank, on the other hand, has a more personal and idiosyncratic touch. Out in the street, I notice a smouldering manhole cover reminiscent of those which populate the New York of Miller's **Daredevil**. I point it out to Frank and tell him I thought he'd made them up. We say goodbye and I head back to the hotel to meet Karen and the Limo to take me back to Kennedy airport. We stand outside for half an hour but it doesn't arrive. Eventually, Karen has to flag down one of the killer yellow cabs. The driver is a young Hispanic guy with dripping black ringlets in the style of Michael Jackson. He says 'I'll have him at the airport twenty five minutes guaranteed, I like to move, I don't wanna wait around, you know what I mean?' SLAM! The cab takes off on two wheels and I'm splattered against its rear upholstery by the sudden G-force. Outside, the New York landscape flashes by at an oddly tilted angle. Twenty-five minutes later we screech to a halt outside the British Airways terminal. 'Course my best time is twenty minutes!'

I catch my plane. Later I look out of the window, down upon New York and it looks like either a gigantic bird-eating spider fashioned in fairy lights or a luminous man with antlers. Dinner is served. I drink a Scotch and half a bottle of wine and then fall asleep. I awake hours later, just as we approach Heathrow. We land and I make my way through customs and find Jamie Delano waiting to take me home. He asks what America was like and all I can think to tell him about is a bumper sticker that Steve Bissette saw bearing the legend 'I swerve for hallucinations'. I am utterly blank. I've left my heart in San Francisco, my tie pin in the hotel and my brains all over the back seat of a yellow cab at Kennedy airport. As of this writing, my heart has turned up in the mail and I think I can buy a tie pin just like the old one. Why are there no major comic companies in Bali?



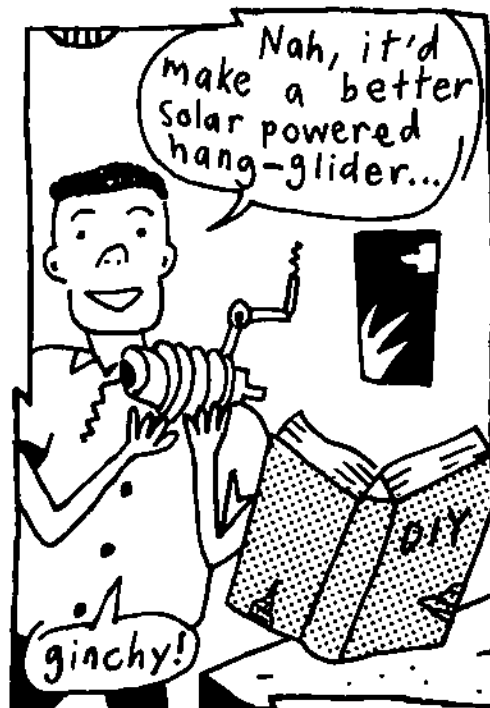
CALICO COUNTY



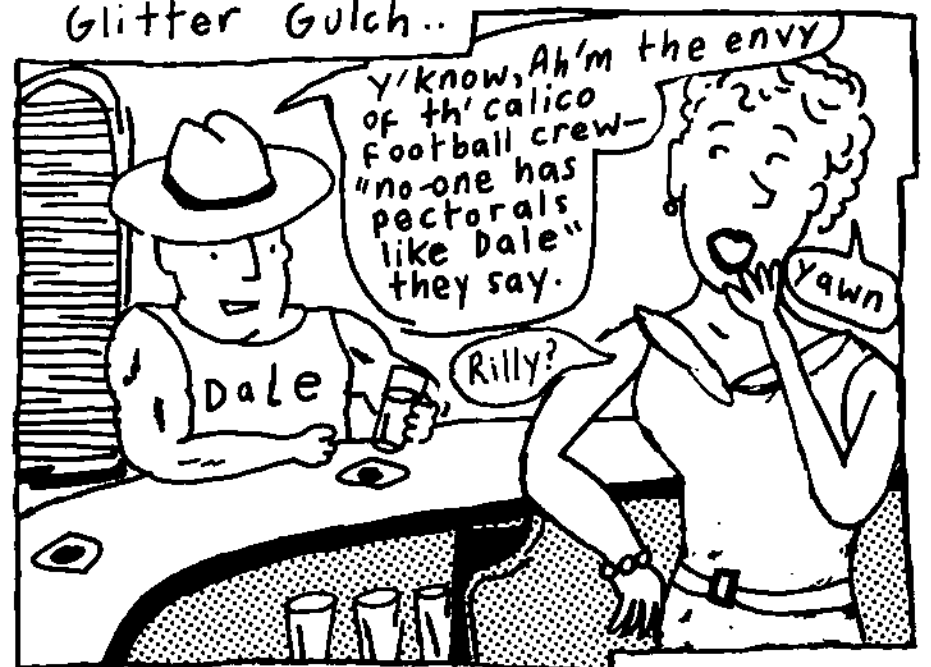
Excitement rarely comes to CALICO county ... In fact on days like this, things are kinda prosaic....

John
©1984
BAGNALL

As usual Abe is in his garage..



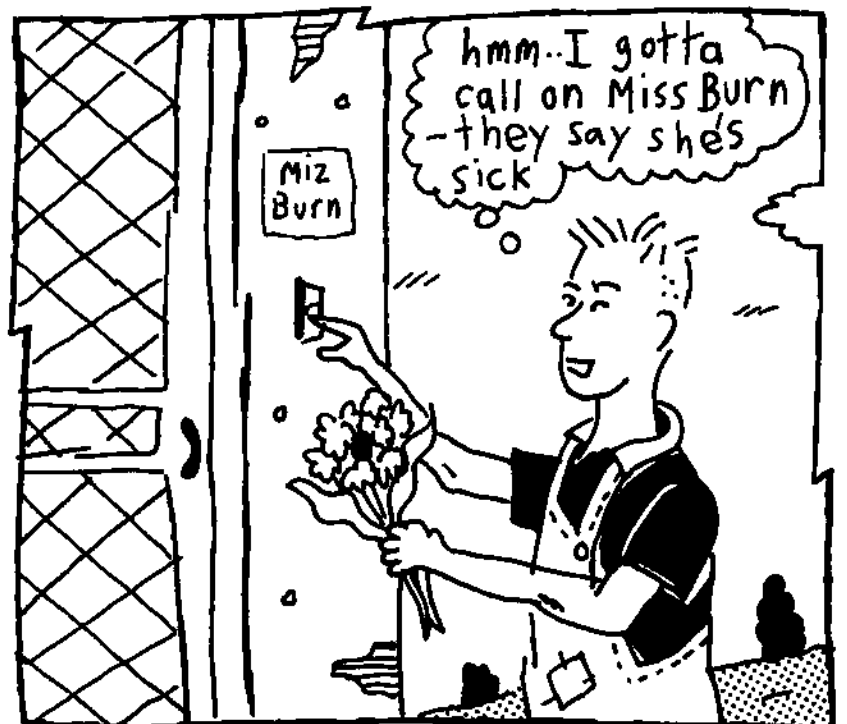
...The bar has just opened in Glitter Gulch..

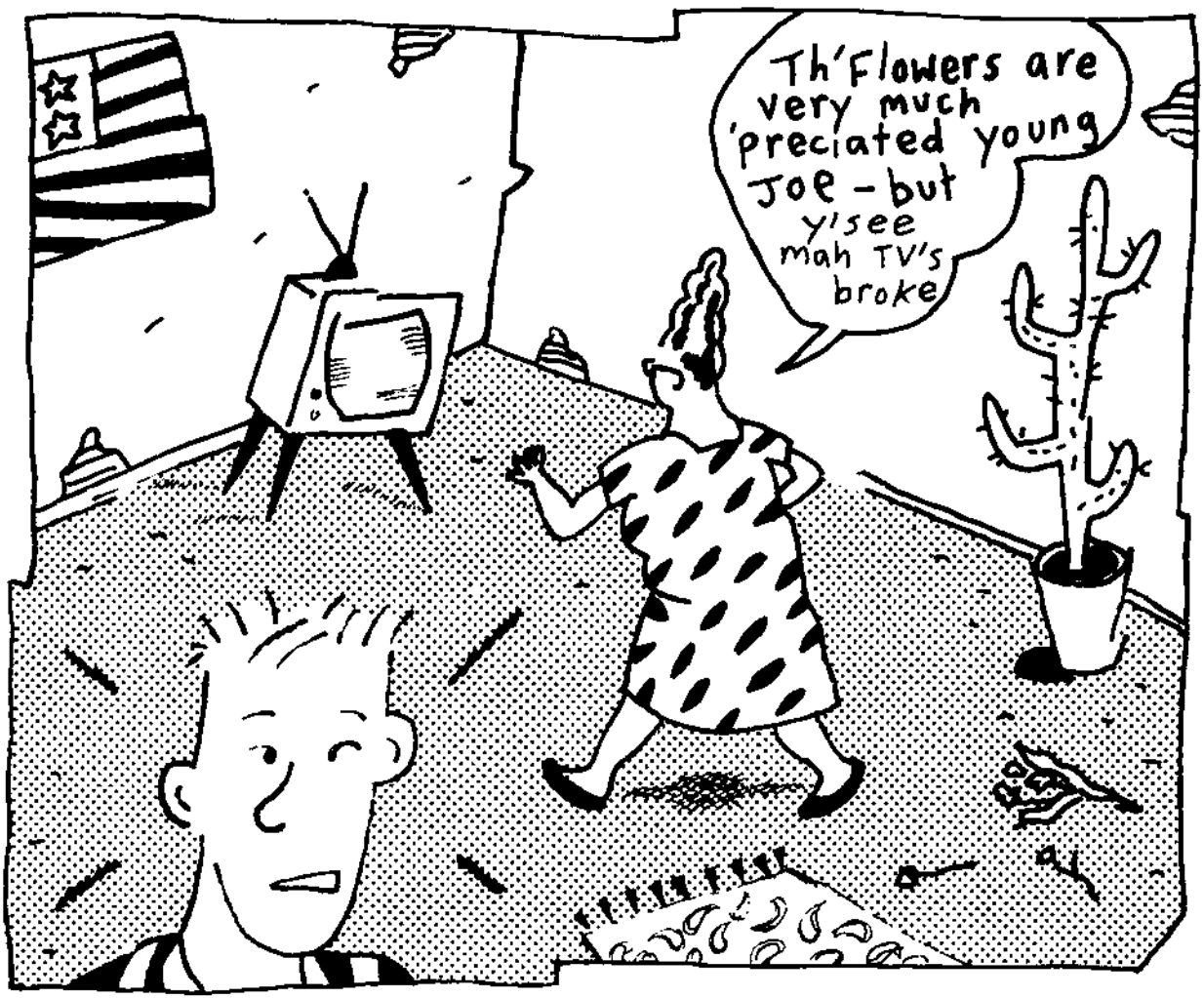


and just now the alligators are watching the hitchhikers..



..But let's get back to Joe- to see why he's got them flowers





Black crappie

Sometimes called a calico bass.

calico
← Nature
notes.

MIKEY BONGO

2000

IN TOWN (WID HIM SPAR

MICK
84

AY! BONGO, MEK WE
GOOF ROUND TOWN
ON DE BUS.



CHECK DEM PUNKS
SNOGGIN, BREDDA?



NEVER CATCH ME KISS
A PARROT LIKE DAT



45 MINUTES LATER...



DEY MUSS FINISH
SOON. LASS STOP
COMING UP.



WOTCHER GO
AN SNIFF SUPAGLUE
FOR? FOOL!



TRUE LOVE?
LESS GO, MIKEY.



01480

FIT TO PRINT?

This guide to producing your own magazine continues with tips on printers - first, finding one and getting your quotations.

Before you go any further, ask yourself if you need to have your zine printed at all. If you're doing less than 200 copies of say a 16-page zine, find out the price of photocopying - it's quicker and often cheaper on shorter runs. Phil Elliott adds, *'Even on larger runs litho-printing doesn't always work out for the best option. Printing may give you a low cost price per copy, but you'll usually have to sell out completely to make your money back.'* So ask yourself how many zines you think you can sell. If you decide on 200 or more, printing may be for you.

■ Finding Your Printer

It's no good going to a printer who specialises in carrier bags or nudie calendars, when all you want is a black-and-white zine. He won't want to do it, or he'll charge you a lot for it. Philip Page from the stripzine **FIF** says, *'The big firms are pricey, small firms or individuals are cheaper but sometimes rough and ready. Get the printer you can afford.'* You can always look up printers in the phone book, but it helps if someone can personally recommend one to you. Check with zine editors, if you like the look of their zine. But as Glenn Dakin points out, *'The printer may have done a job cheaply because the editor is a friend. If you expect the same treatment, you may be disappointed!'* Look into colleges, co-operatives and local schemes, where you can also learn to do printing yourself.

■ Quote, Unquote

Don't get just one name, get several, preferably local or at least easy to get to. Write to them for a quote, making your requirements as clear as possible; size of zine (A4/A5); number of pages (a page has two printed sides); number of copies; type of paper for the inside and the cover if it's different, perhaps enclosing a sample. Most importantly ask how long it will take to do. It may be useful to ask for the finishing (that's collating, folding, stapling, and trimming) to be itemised separately, in case you decide to economise and finish them yourself. If you're not sure what to ask for, get advice from someone who's printed a zine before.

After a time, you'll get your quotes in. If they don't arrive, phone up and ask, but always insist on a quote in writing. You may be surprised at how much they vary, but don't automatically go for the cheapest quote. It may be unrealistically low and you may not get a good print job. Paul Duncan of the comics fanzine **Arkensword** says, *'Many printers have large contracts with firms that pay months later after a job is done, so if you offer to pay ready cash, some printers will lower their rates to alleviate their cash-flow problems.'* There's no VAT payable on zines (yet!), so you shouldn't be charged it. At first a printer may give you a low quote to get your business and then increase it as issues go by. Always be prepared to get a comparative quote from elsewhere, if only to satisfy yourself that he's reflecting genuine increases in his costs. But don't feel that just because he's done the last issue, you must do the next one with him. Paul adds, *'The worst case of this is when the printer says his price went up £20 during the time he printed it or there are hidden extras he forgot to mention.'* This is why you must get the quote in writing first - you can refuse to pay any more than the agreed price. If you request any changes to your quote, get the new quote in writing too. Don't pester him for too many quotes though - decide what you want.

□ Next issue: How To Do The Deal

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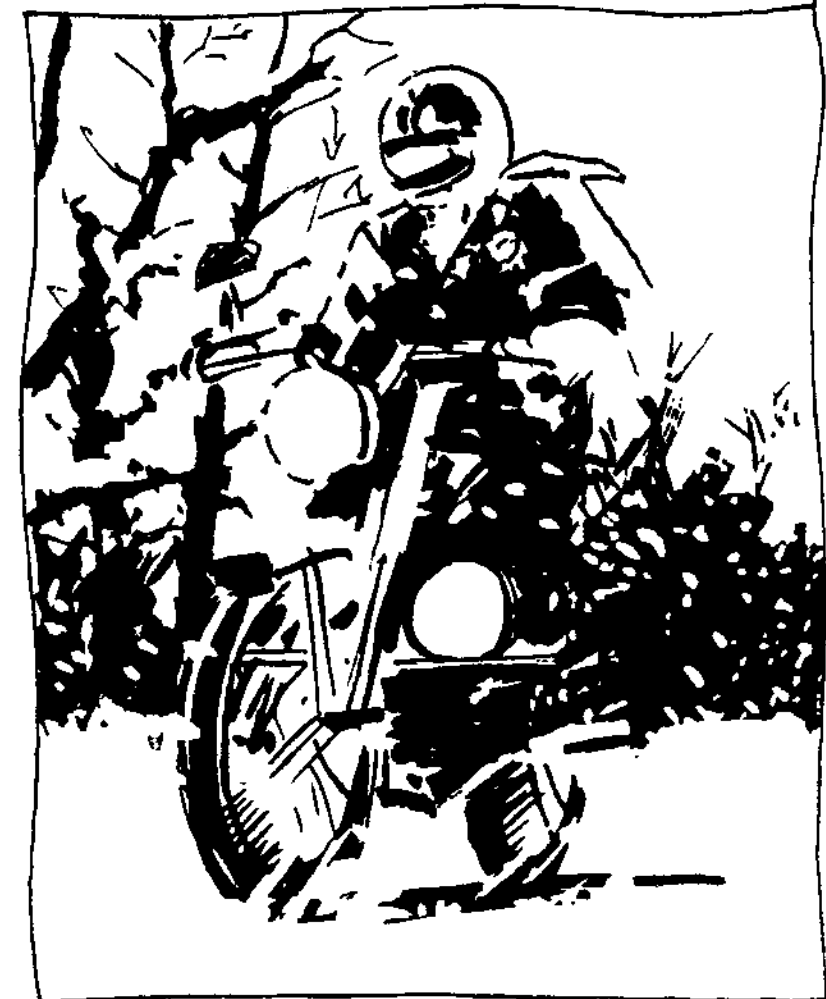
WE COME ACROSS THE STRAND
LIKE A LOG ON A DUCK-POND...

E. Campbell



WE, THAT IS, ALEC MacGARRY AND
BRENDAN MacGARRY ON HAZARDOUS
RETURN TRIP FROM CHRISTMAS
VISIT TO THE FOLKS IN BLACKPOOL
—ARE STRANDED IN LAMBETH
FOR HOGMANAY—

AND MEANWHILE THE BIG SCENE
AT THE KING CANUTE HAS ALREADY
STARTED -





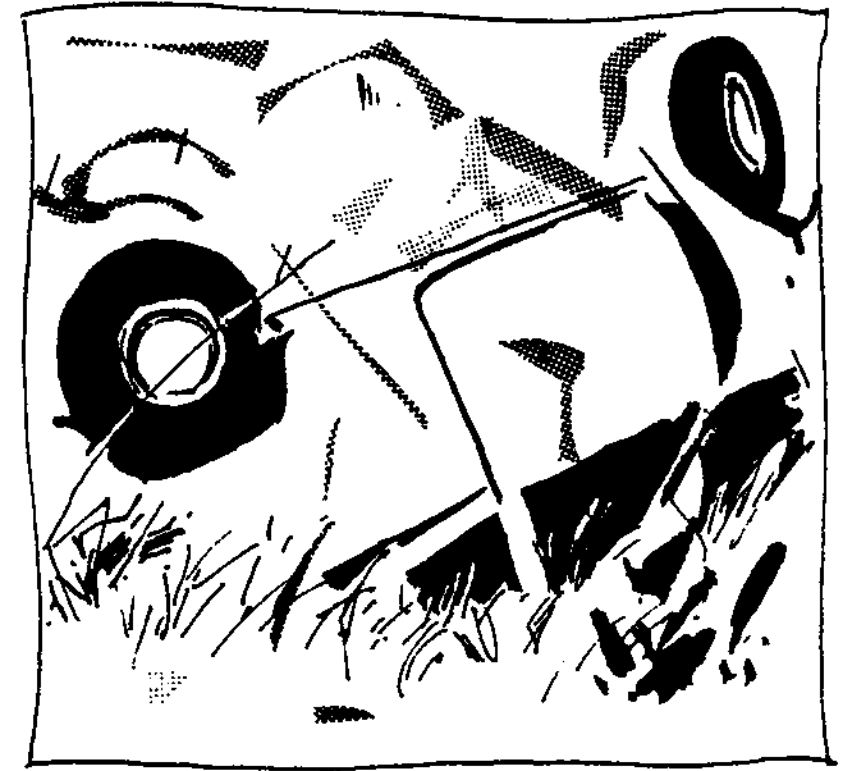
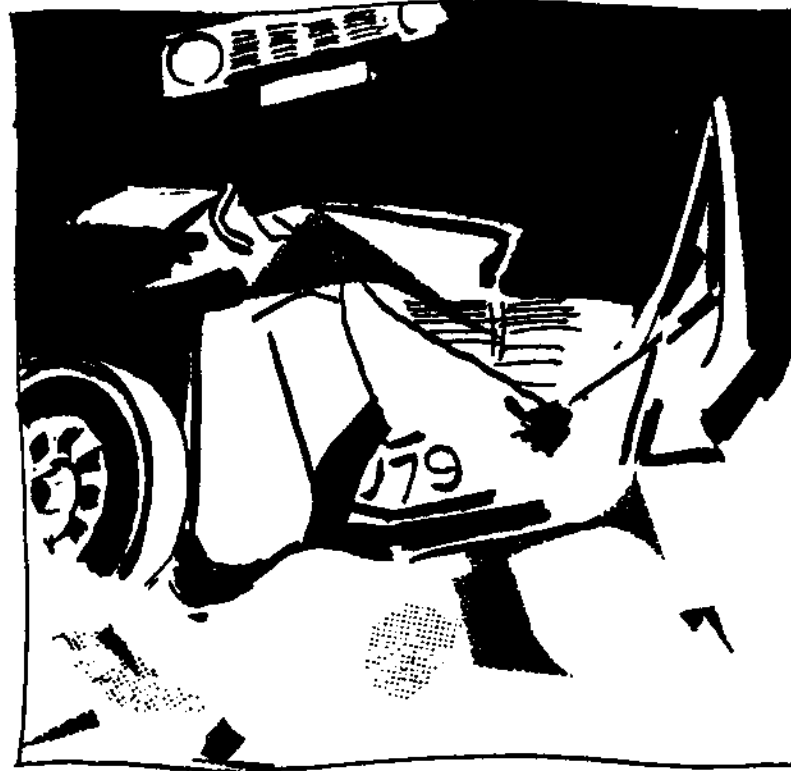
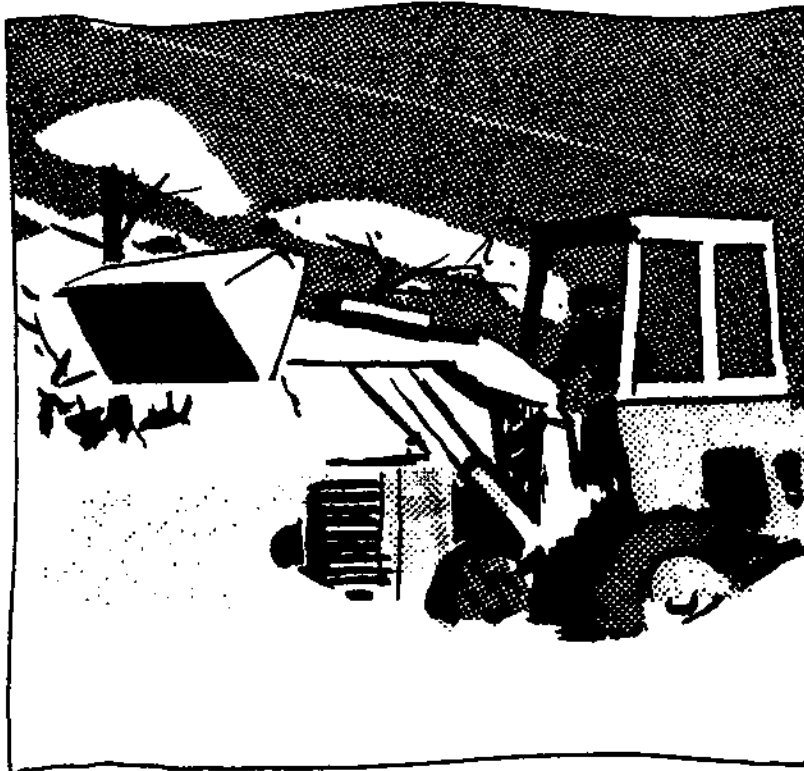
BLACK ICE ~ Four Wickford men die in car that goes off road on A130 and finishes upside down in water-filled ditch.



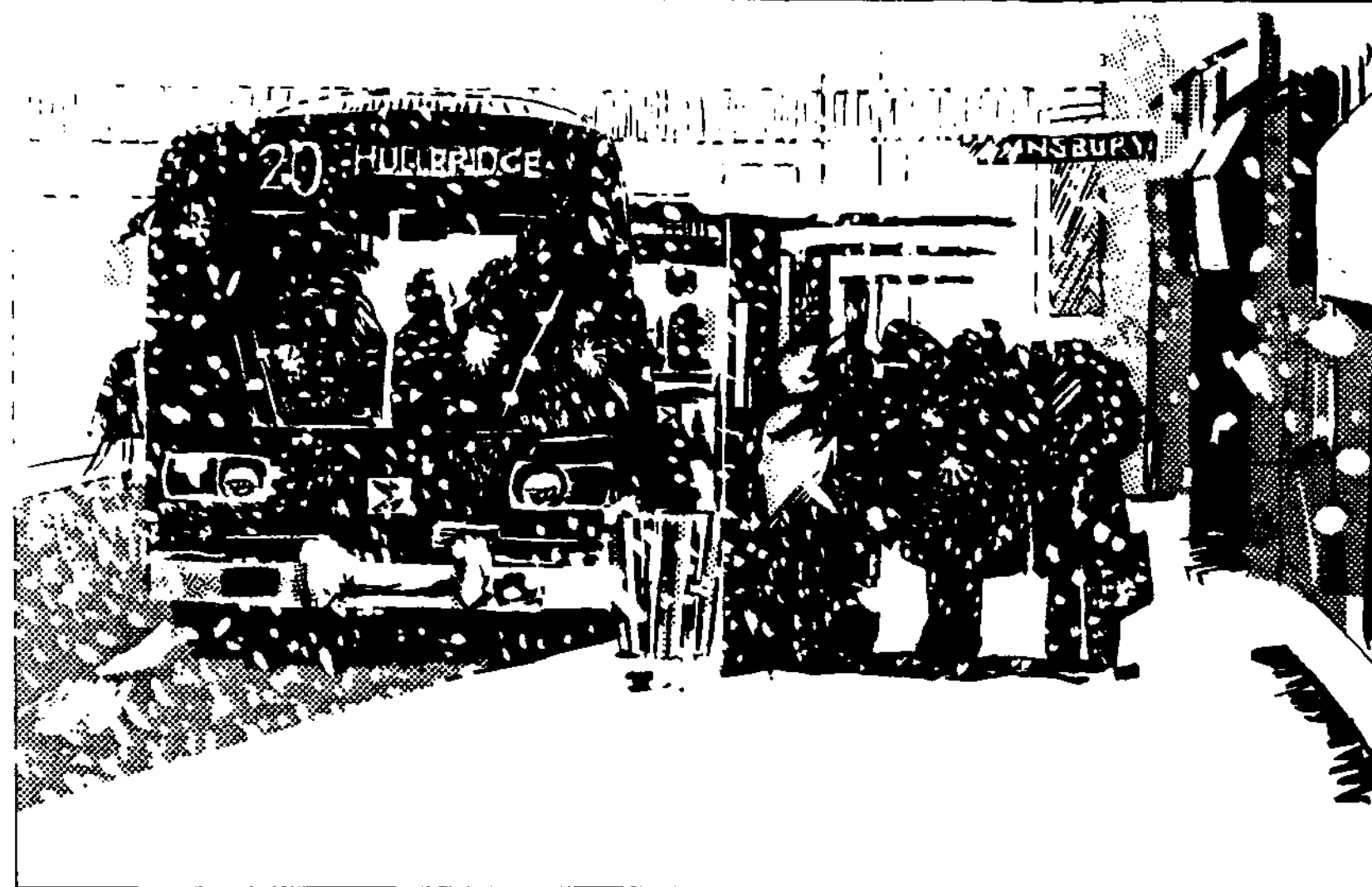
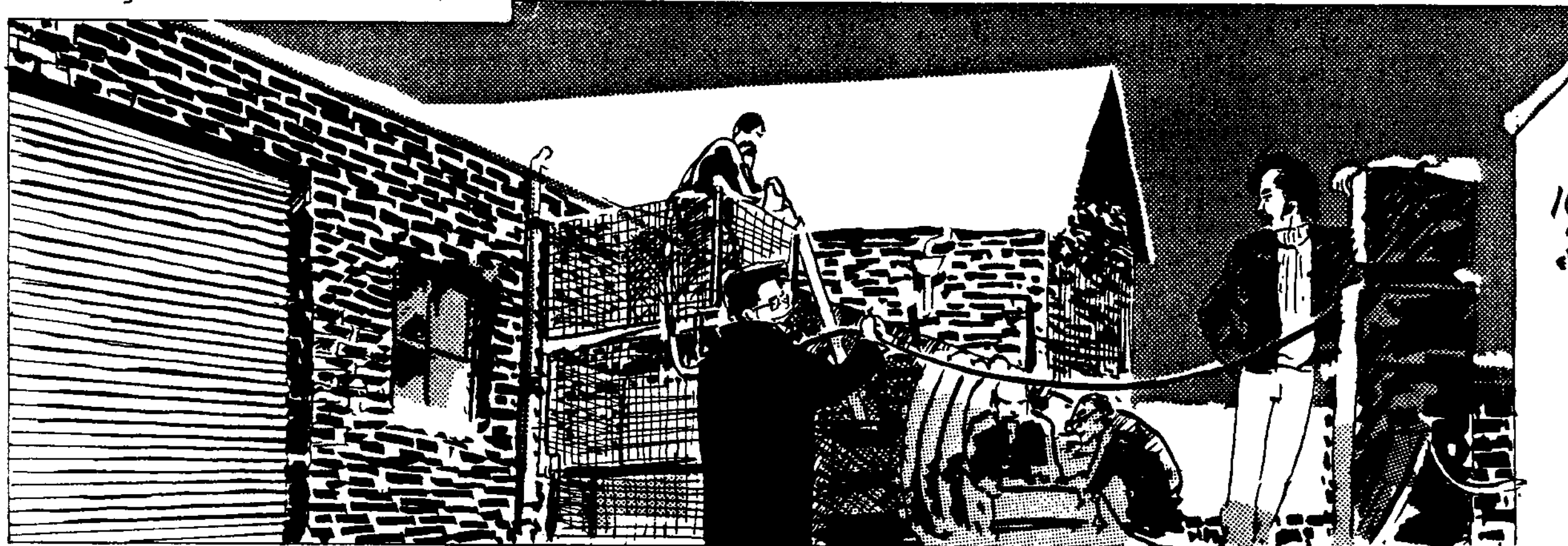
CAR BURSTS INTO FLAMES ~ on Pitsea flyover causing pile-up of twenty-five cars and two coaches



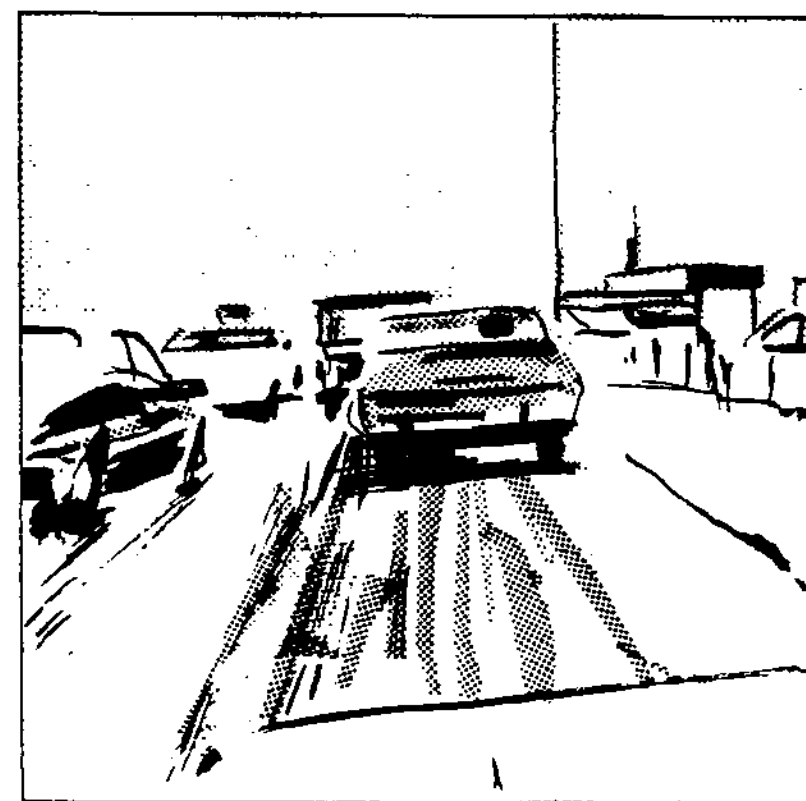
POLICE MAN ~ breaks pelvis and youth breaks back jumping 30ft. from flyover to avoid skidding car - eighteen other people treated in hospital - A13 closed for 6 hours.



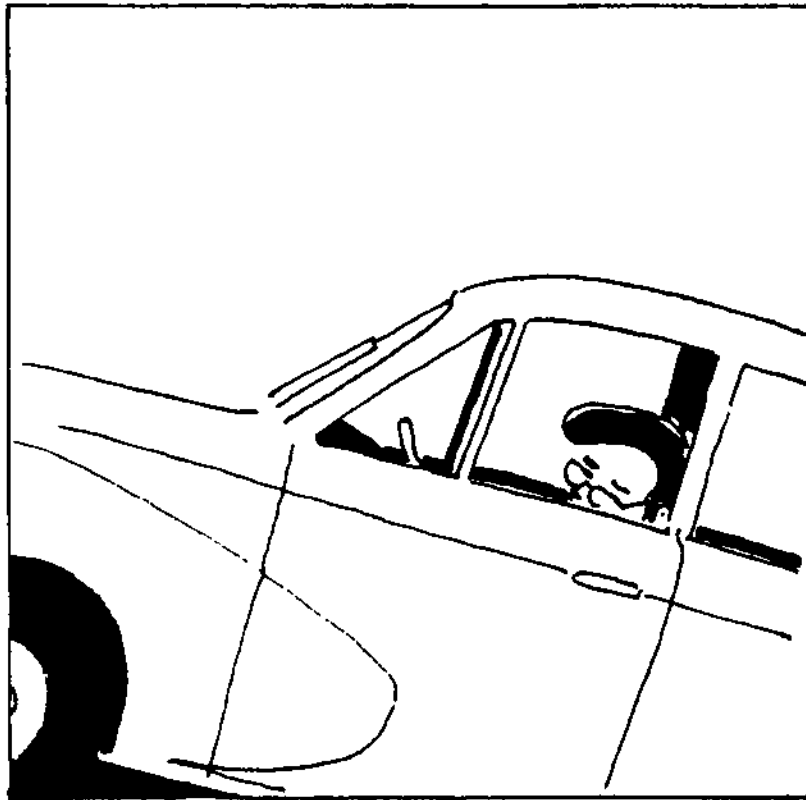
TANKER AND LORRY DRIVERS STRIKE ~ and at the works we run out of heating fuel - getting some through later but in the meantime they decide to pipe diesel fuel into the heating tank, diesel at 90p gal. costing three times as much.



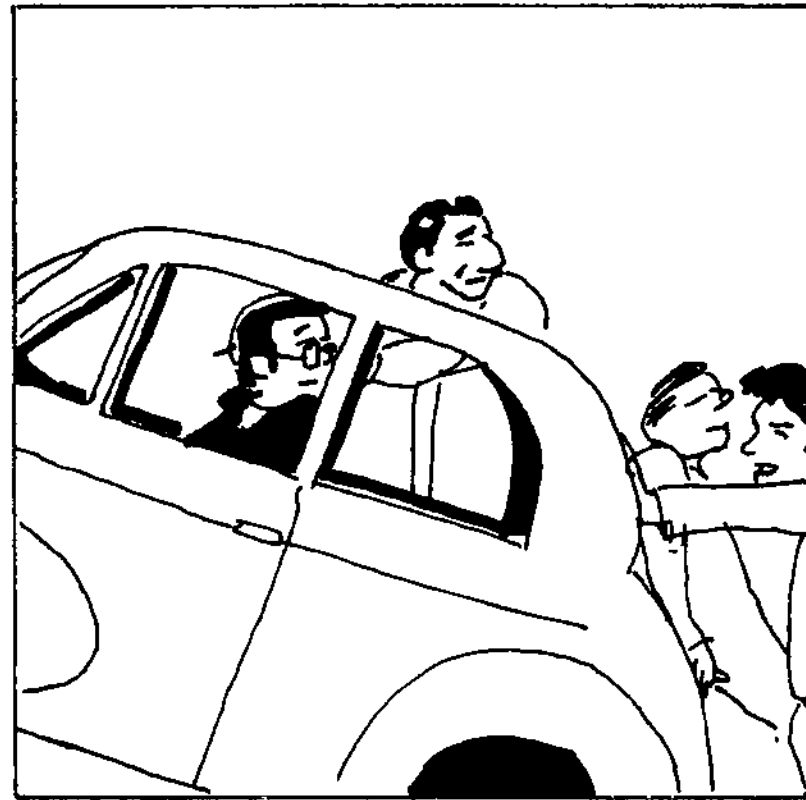
SNOWED UNDER ~ the weather comes out in sympathy with the striking railmen and council workers today ~



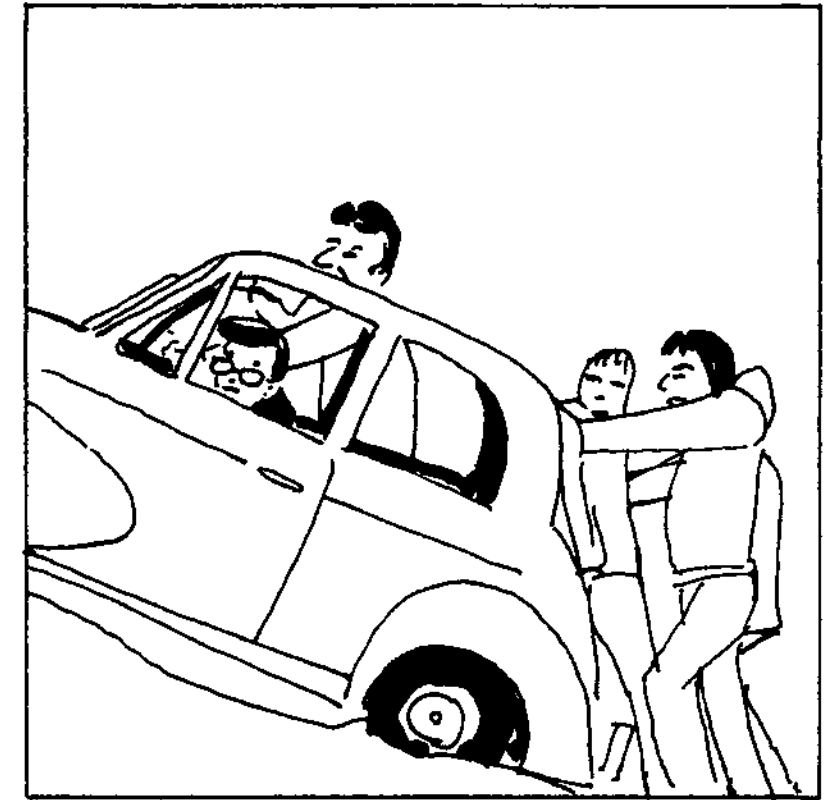
COMING HOME FROM WORK ONE NIGHT - ALEC MacGARRY GETTING LIFT FROM TOM AND FALLING ASLEEP IN THE FRONT SEAT -



-COMES AWAKE TO FIND TOM HAS GOT CAUGHT IN DRIFT AND ASKED BUNCH OF PASSERS-BY TO HELP PUSH THE CAR -

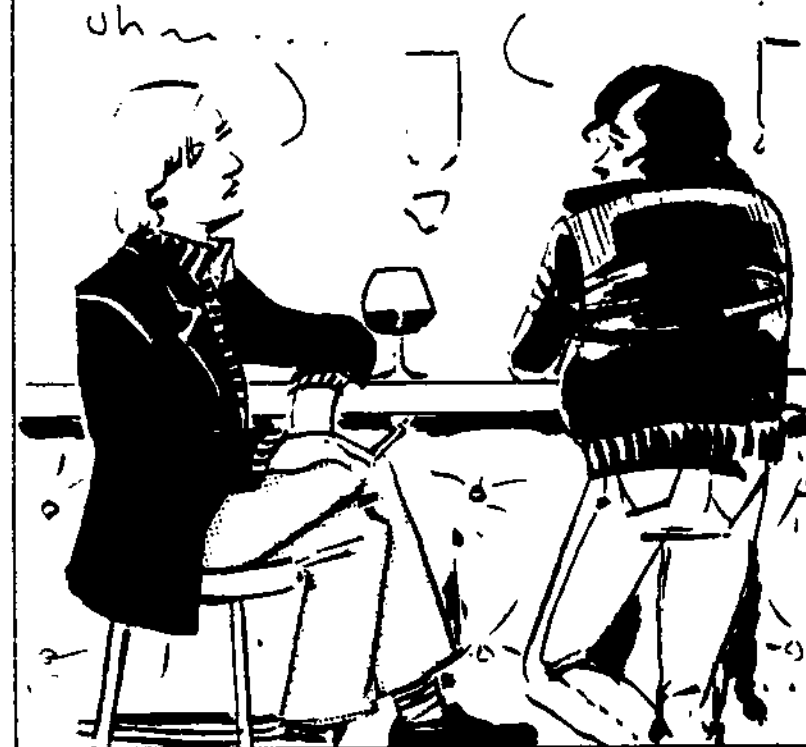


BUT TOO POLITE TO WAKE UP MacGARRY -



ONE NIGHT AT THE KING CANUTE -

THIS IS THE WINTER OF MY DISCONTENT...AS THE CHAP SAID - SHOULDNT THAT BE OUR DISCONTENT?



I THINK YOU'LL FIND IT'S THE ROYAL 'WE' - RICHARD III SPEAKING THEREFORE 'OUR' DISCONTENT -

I SAY! - ARE YOU A FELLOW THESPIAN?



WHAT STRATA ARE YOU IN?

ACTUALLY I'M A FORKLIFT DRIVER



ONE SWEET NIGHT IN JANUARY
DANNY GREY COMES IN THE
MINERVA WITH LITTLE PENNY
MOORE —



-WHO GIVES ME A PERSONAL
BIG SMILE -



AFTERWARDS TAKES DANNY TO
WHERE SHE STABLES HER HORSE -

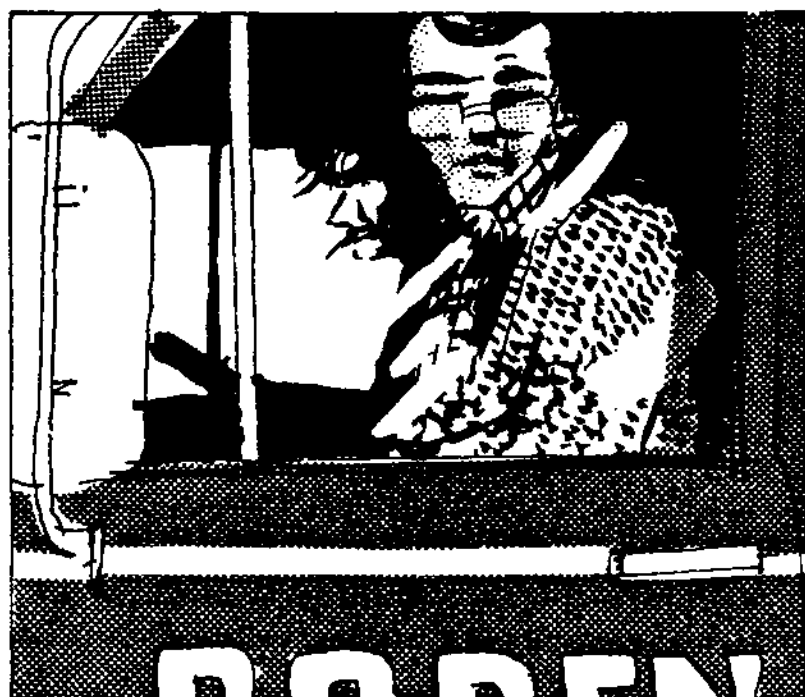


BEST NOT GO TOO NEAR-HE
DOESN'T LIKE PEOPLE MUCH.

THEN OTHER GIRLS OCCUPIED HIS
TIME AND I THOUGHT MORE AND
MORE ABOUT PENNY-ONCE DRIVING
TO SOUTHBEND FROM THE CANUTE HE
REMARKS THAT A LITTLE GIRL
WE'VE JUST PASSED LOOKS LIKE
PENNY'S DAUGHTER -



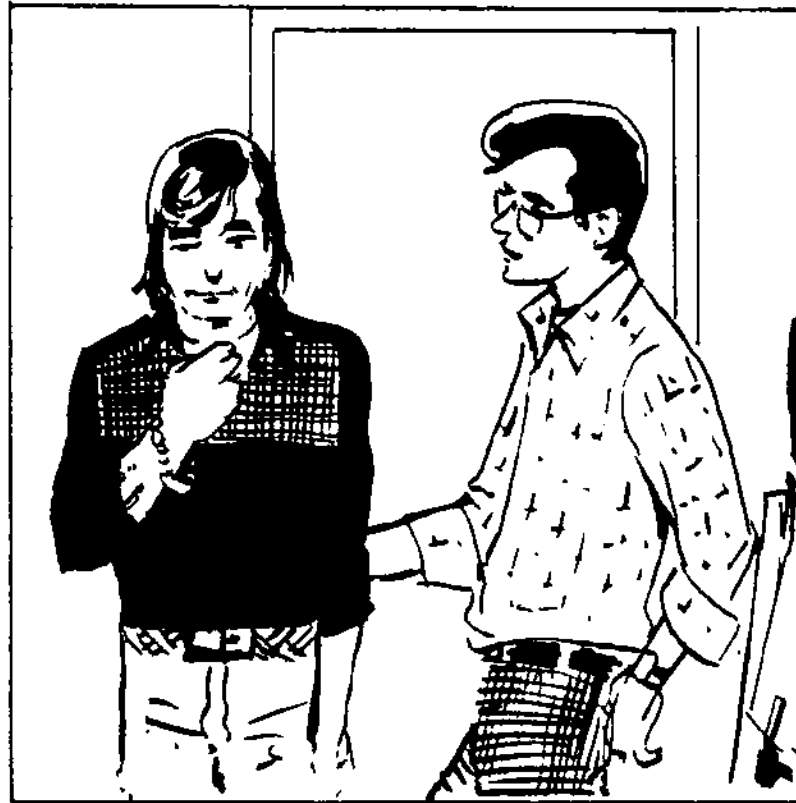
I DIDN'T KNOW SHE HAS ONE,
DIDN'T SEE, ASK WHAT SHE'S
LIKE AND SO ON -



IN MARCH IT'S PENNY'S BIRTHDAY PARTY AND SHE TELLS HER SISTER JEN TO BRING DANNY ALONG ... 'AND HIS FRIEND ALEC' -



PLEASED TO HAVE BEEN REMEMBERED AND DECIDE I WILL MAKE SOME KIND OF PLAY FOR PENNY TONIGHT -



PARTY'S OFF, MATE -

WHAT'S UP THEN?



SOME BLACK ICE ON ASHINGDON HILL, APPARENTLY... SHE HIT THE FRONT OF A LORRY AND THEY SAY THE CAR'S A WRITE-OFF -



JOHN SAID SHE LOOKED QUITE BASHED ABOUT.. LOST A COUPLE OF TEETH ...



E. Campbell

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escapology

More from the mailbag! Drop us a line and tell us what you think of **ESCAPE's** strips, features and interviews. If your letter is printed, you can win a wizard **ESCAPE** cartooning pencil!

TURNING POINT

It often seems to me that I start off being indifferent or even disliking the better things in life. When I first saw 'Alec' in **ESCAPE**, I thought, 'That's quite nice but a bit pointless.' I was a staunch anti-superhero man but tended to be a fantasist ('Krazy Kat' or Mark Beyer). I also sniffed at the drawing-a bit reminiscent of **Reader's Digest** and I hate Letratone. That was then and to some extent it's still the same, but not in relation to Eddie Campbell's 'Alec'. The turning point came with the amazing range of mood in the story in **ESCAPE 4**. I now love the way he uses Letratone, almost painting with it. I also love the way he presents a totally un-nostalgic view of Britain. Many people seem unable to escape from harping back to the past. Everyone's in the '30s or the '60s. Alec has a touch of the rockabilly about him but it just feels like now-no preaching,

no machismo, no far-away horizons, but a great deal of generosity and humanity. I rate the **Alec** volume very highly indeed and am just wondering when you're going to bring out the next one!

JULIAN WATSON, GALWAY

The second Alec book, Love and Beerglasses, should be out this summer.

THIRST FOR KNOWLEDGE

ESCAPE 5 was a bit of a mixed-up case. The sharpest cover yet and wonderfully concise layout/presentation, but the content seemed to be sitting on its arse a bit. It was good, deal good, Phil Elliott, Chris Long and Russell Christian in particular, but it failed to slap me in the face while arresting me, where previous issues have succeeded. Also my thirst for factual knowledge exceeds my desire to 'get to know' famous people. Hence I gained greater satisfaction from your 'Clear Line' overview in **ESCAPE 3** than I did from Alan and Eddie padding very cautiously round one another. Tell us lots about BD around the world-who, when and how to get them.

JOHN D. MCKAY, EDINBURGH

This issue looks at Italian fumetti and Brand New BD will continue. But unfortunately we can't publish too much information about foreign comics, especially when they are untranslated and hard to get hold of, because some readers find it frustrating to hear about comics they're unable to read. What do others think? We are now looking into publishing international strips in **ESCAPE**, showing you the work, as well as telling you about it.

OVERWHELMING URGE

On the whole I'm impressed with **ESCAPE 5**. Although I didn't like all the strips, there wasn't one I didn't enjoy reading, simply because many of the artists are new to me, and most of them deserved a second or third reading. All the features were interesting. D.I.Y.B.D. was particularly informative and while reading it I barely resisted an overwhelming urge to rush to the nearest photocopier and get my own zine on the streets. Eddie Campbell and Alan Moore's cosy chat was the highlight, giving more insight than would have been gained from a more conventional interview. I also ▶

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escapology ADDICTED

enjoyed the Leo Baxendale article. Sadly I've tended to ignore **The Beano** in the past, so I would like to see more in this vein. **ESCAPE**'s design is very appealing, stylish without being self-conscious, which is a fault of magazines like **The Face** and **Blitz**. I also like the A5 format—don't change it. Thanks for helping to introduce me to a wider world of comics.

MARTIN FEEKINS, RUTLAND

I can't get enough of **ESCAPE**, in fact I'm addicted. I read it, put it down, then pick it up again and read it again. This goes on for about a month! So I think **ESCAPE** should come out more often, or at least on time!

JERRY HOLLIDAY, BRISTOL

Yes Sir!! **ESCAPE** actually comes out 'about every three months' and now that it's distributed to high-street newsagents we're doing all we can to stick to a quarterly schedule.

GENIUS PENCILS

As a disillusioned ex Fine Art student who's discovered doodling as a valium substitute, I'd like to congratulate you on your excellent magazine, which I buy whenever I can afford to, fitting it into my tight dole budget for sanity, ie. food, soft toilet-paper, stamps, etc. Encouraged by such genius pencils as Serge Clerc, Chris Long and Mariscal, I can only continue to unburden myself of my anti-social observations and bigotted female opinions, in the hope of one day acquiring a decent pen. Keep the standard up but the price down!

JANE, ABERDARE

How about a decent pencil instead? We're keeping **ESCAPE** at £1.00 for as long as possible.

ESCAPE 5's strips: Myra Hancock's 'Holiday Snaps' worked well—she always seems to 'let go' more with greater space and creates an interesting paradox by treating Sharon and Maureen with both contempt and affection. 'Contamination Zone' was the best work of Savage Pencil's I've seen in a long time. I was dubious about his more ordered drawing style after his wonderfully chaotic **Corpsemeat**, but he's got it just right here in the combination of wild brush strokes and detailed penning. Phil Elliott's strip was nice and obtuse whilst open to endless interpretations, though his faces tend to be a bit samey—something I've never found with his

'Tales from Gimbley'. I found Trevis Phoenix' work had a certain charm and elegance, and although his figurework was reminiscent of fashion-model styles I detest, he seems to have adapted elements from various approaches and made them his own. Hunt's 'Calculus Cat' was probably the most enjoyable strip this time. That second page was a masterful bit of writing! Also loved the watery rainlike effect on the last page. 'Trogga' had some funny touches, but the ending was a distinct letdown if Chris Long was trying to make some point about the use of Stanley knives in football violence. Ed Pinsent's strip was involving, if perhaps a little long, though I like the 'profound' overtones he manages to work in. Russell Christian was at his best—eerie and unsettling and 'Temptation' continues as unpredictably as before—keep it up Glenn!

NEIL CANHAM, ROCHESTER

Thanks for your review—do other readers agree with Neil's evaluations? And what do you think of the strips in this issue?

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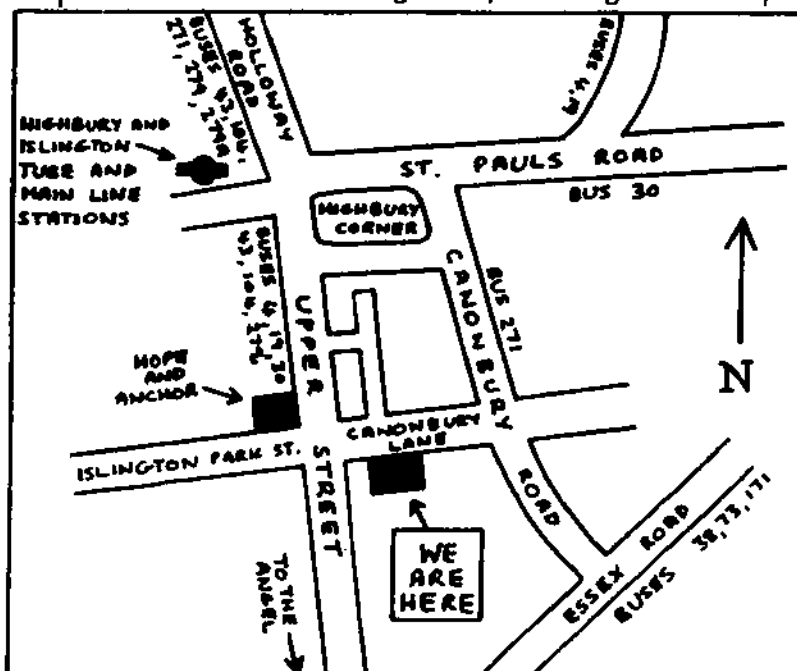
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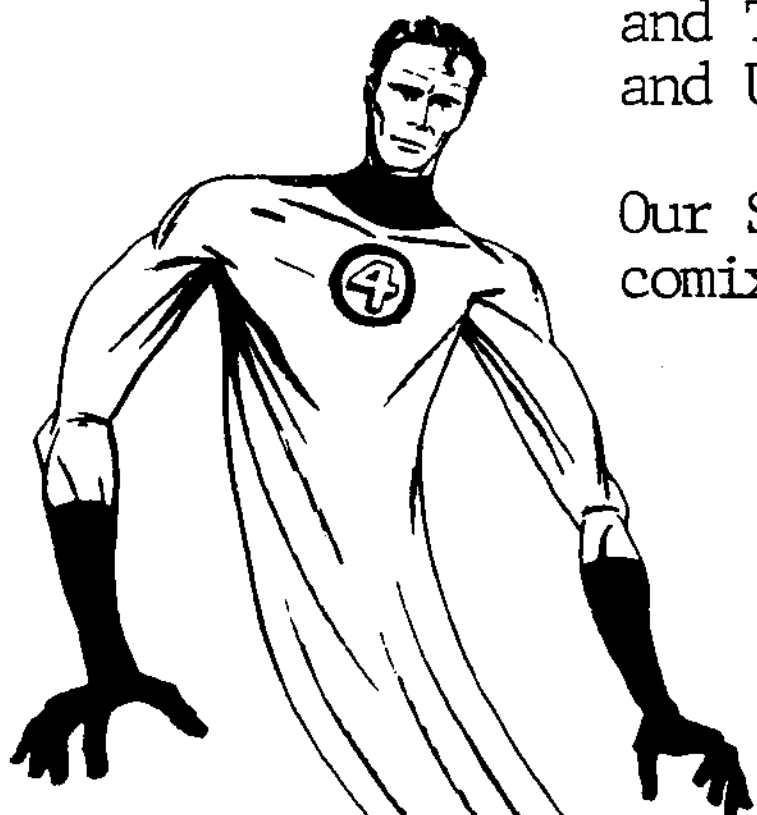
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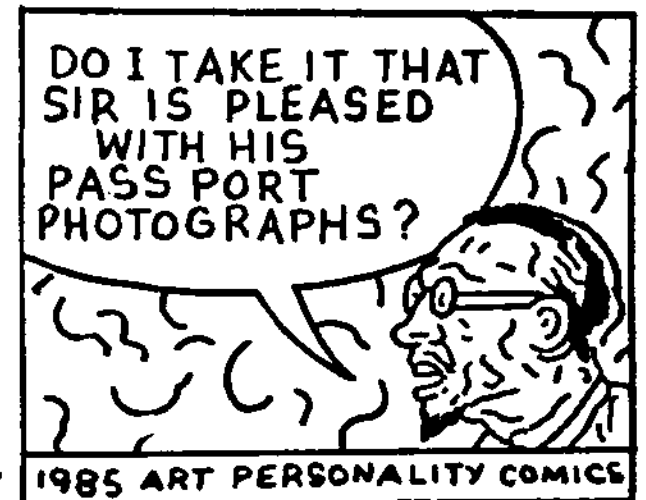
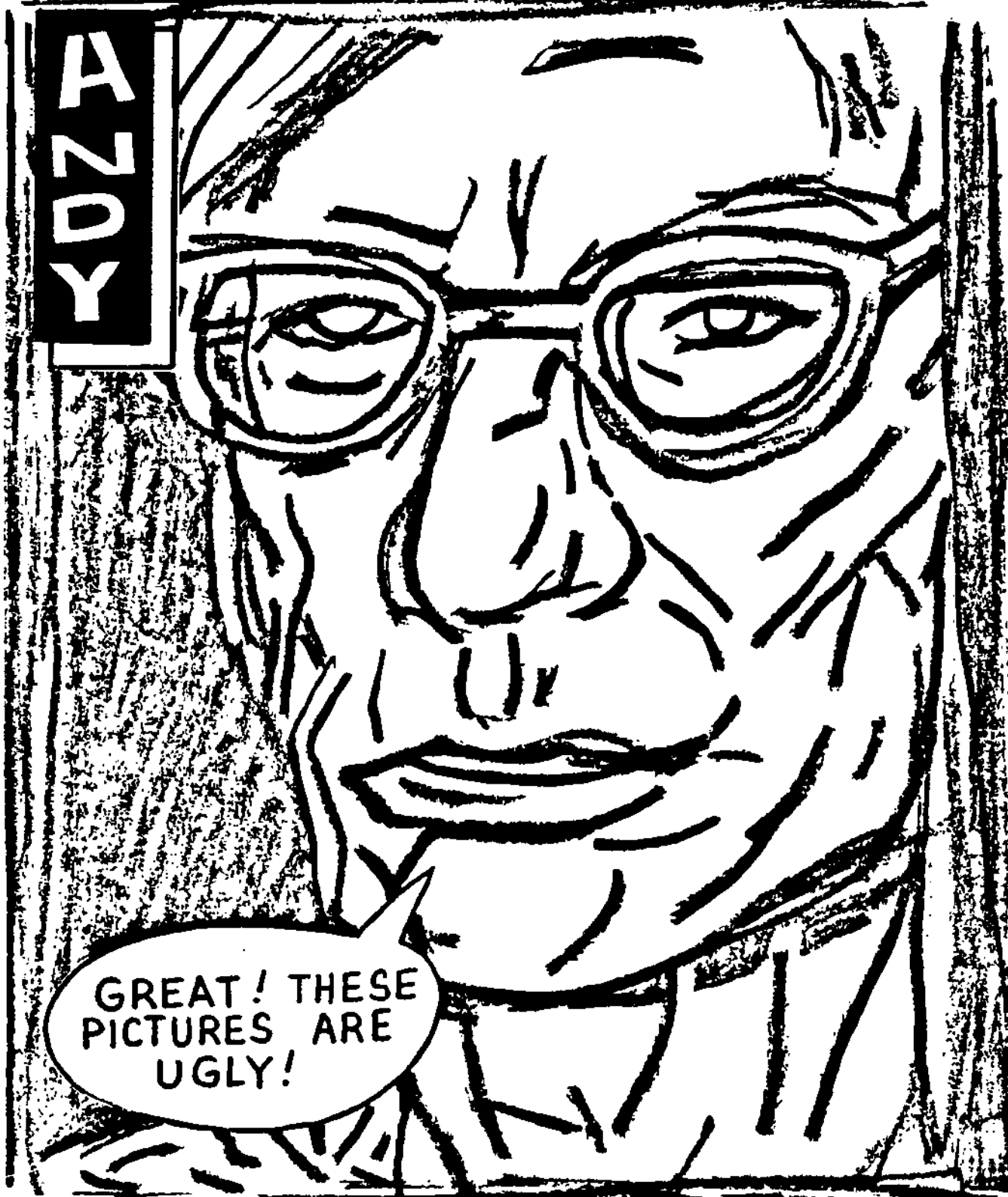
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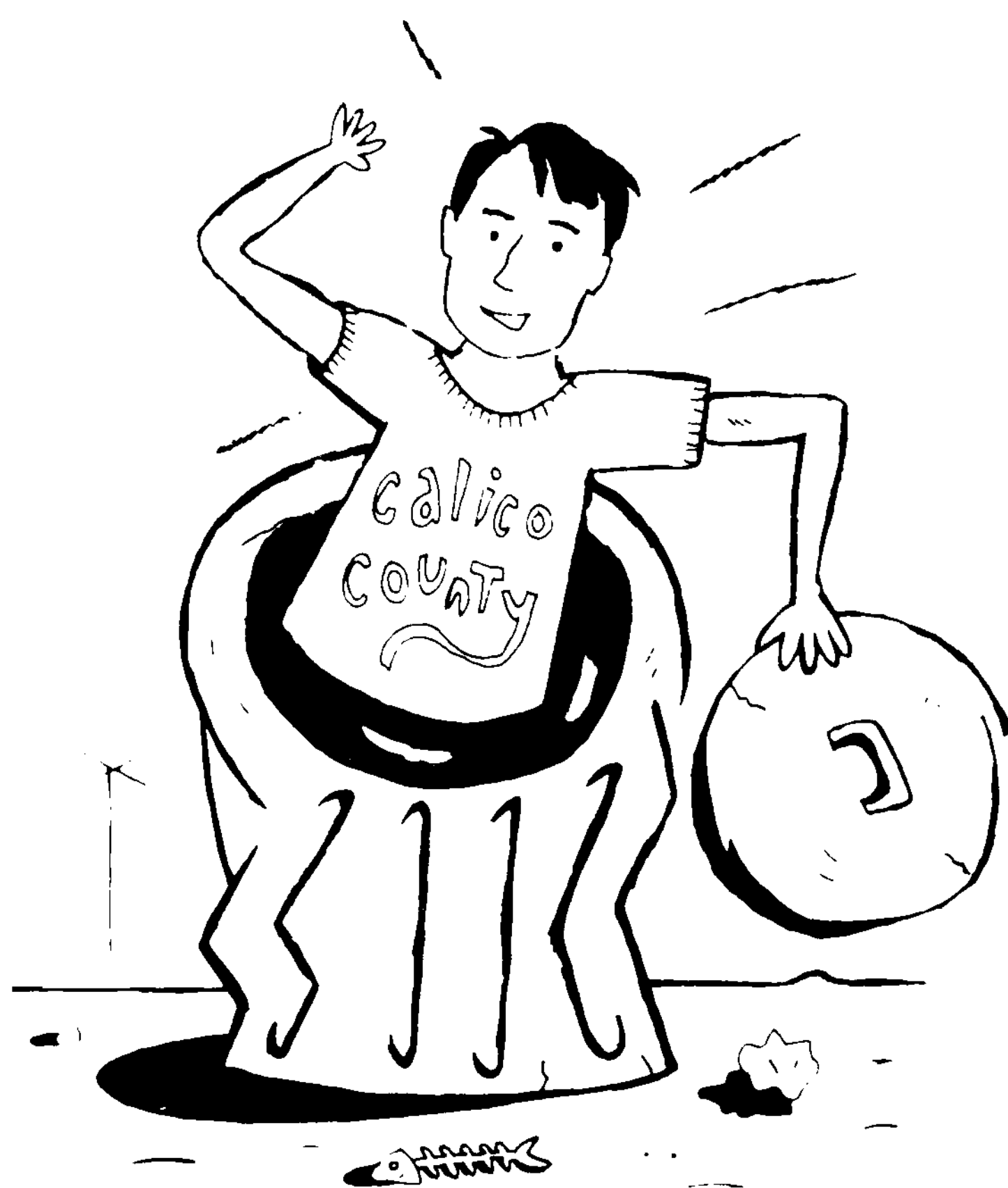


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Escape ARTISTS



△ **JOHN BAGNALL** produces Liverpool's **Trashcan** with fellow hipster Frank Martin. Favourite possessions include his souvenirs of the Vatican, U.S. Hard-Core tapes and 1950's **Practical Householder** magazines. He is working on being a New England-style preppy, from the socks up.

○ **EDDIE CAMPBELL** and his wife Anne are currently immersed in the pleasures of the Deep Pan Pizza. Having eaten, Eddie is putting the finishing touches to the second Alec book, *Love and Beerglasses*.

○ **GLENN DAKIN** is very fond of the 'Moomintroll' stories by Tove Jansson and would like to see her islands in Finland. *'My work is a product of listening to too much Scott Walker and Jonathan Richman.'*

○ **ANDY DOG** *'Imagine Egon Schiele, Max Beckman and Ralph Steadman involved in a fatal motorway pile-up. Imagine the contents of the body-bag boiled up and served as a stew. That's what I was imagining while Camberwell School of Art was trying to teach me how to draw.'*

○ **PHIL ELLIOTT** draws for micro magazines and 'Rodney: The Premonition II' in **Sounds** with his buddy Charlie Trumper. He's already completed the first chapter of the next Doc Chaos story.

○ **HUNT EMERSON** illustrated the Jazz Butcher's record sleeve and designed the Equator's graphics. He's just bought himself some tartan trousers and a rubber studded belt to hold them up.

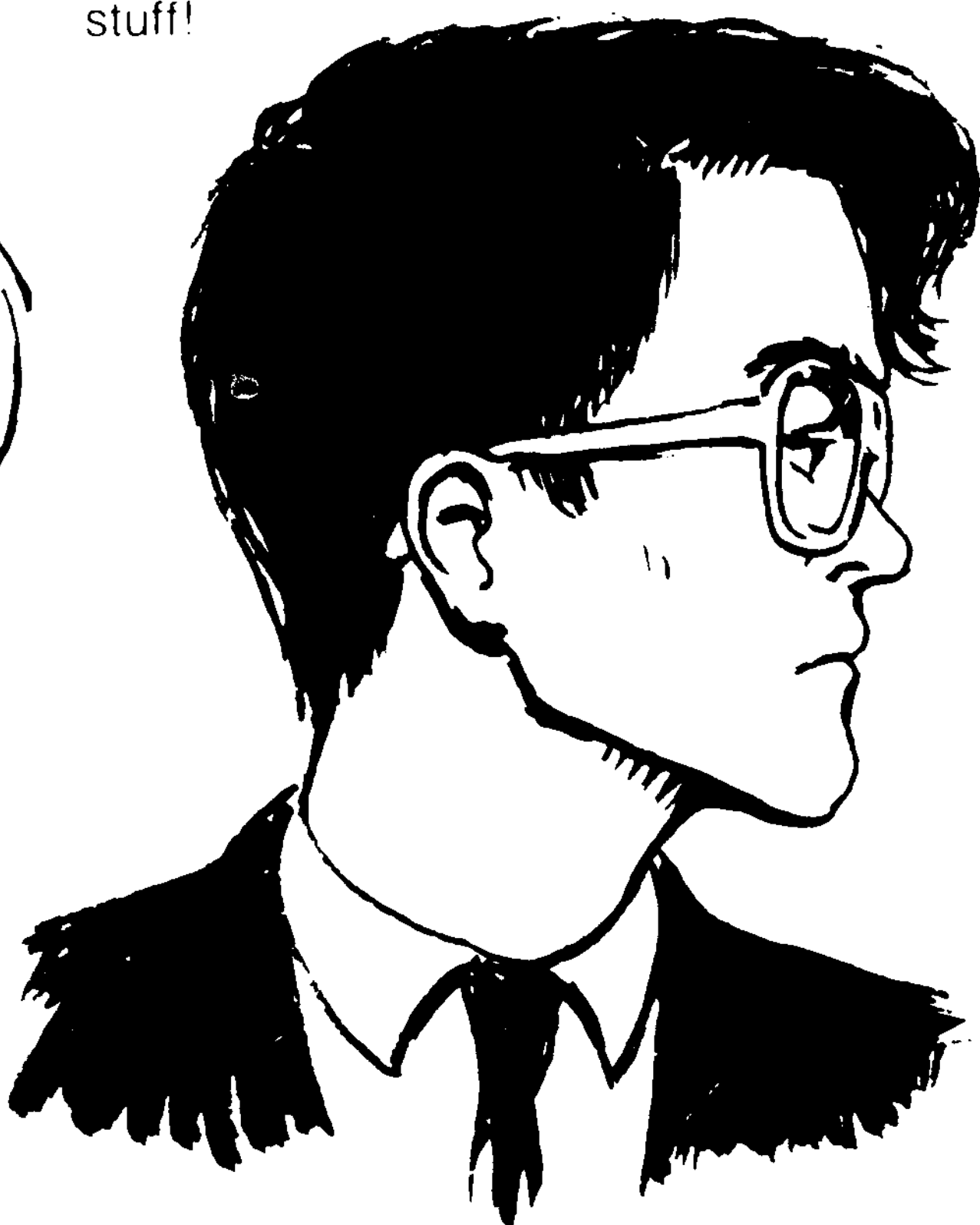
○ **LAWRENCE GRAY** vehemently denies all connection with MI5 but does admit to co-founding the London Screenwriters Workshop.

▷ **MIKE HAWTHORNE** was born in Manchester but grew up in Nigeria. He's drawn LP covers for Midnite Records, Rotterdam and illustrates for **Black Echoes**. His hobbies include killing sacred cows.

ORIAN HUGHES is enjoying the freedom of the freelancer, storyboarding videos for Killing Joke, Ian McCulloch and others and commercials for French yoghurt.

○ **SHAKY KANE** bears an uncanny likeness to the face on the Turin Shroud, a likeness that would shape his life. He thinks comics should be low-brow and stay clear of the coffee-table.

▽ **PHIL LASKEY** spends his days being wary of dogs on his postal round. He gets most of his ideas while burning the midnight oil, putting his stamp on his stripzine **Nerk** and renewing his enthusiasm for railways. All first class stuff!



○ **ED PINSENT** *'The Family Tales are based on anecdotes told to me by Mum, my Gran, and an elephant. Elephants never forget.'*

○ **POKKETTZ**, known to many as 'his nibs', became a slave to the pen as a cartoonist in the '70s group, Ar-Zak with Hunt and Steve Bell. His corps d'elite include Pont, Bateman, Fougasse and Harry Rountree, who he feels has been unjustly neglected.

○ **SAVAGE PENCIL** managed to get out of Boston just before it was cut off by snow. He's getting older with every strip he draws, describes himself as a **'Hard-Core Surrealist'** and is The Third Man in the Battle of the Eyes. Eh?

○ **DAVE THORPE** used to write 'Captain Britain' for Marvel UK until he saw reason and 'Art-Man' for **pssst!** until they saw reason.



Escape

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